A

Sigh for Peace;

OR

The Cauſe of Diviſion Diſcovered.

WHEREIN

The great Goſpel Promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, and the Doctrine of Prayer with Impoſition of hands, as the way ordained of God to ſeek for it; Is aſſerted and vindicated, as the Intereſt and Duty of Chriſts Diſciples in general.

In Anſwer to a Book Intituled

A Search for Schiſm.

By Tho. Grantham, *a Servant of Chriſt.*

Gal. 5. 7, 8, 9. *Ye did run well, who did hinder you that you ſhould not obey the truth? This perſwaſion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.*

I have confidence in you, through the Lord, that you will be none otherwiſe minded; but he that troubleth you ſhall bear his burthen whoſoever he be. Wherefore love the Truth and Peace, Zech. 8. 19.

Printed for the Author, 1671.

BRITISH MUSEUM

The Epiſtle Dedicatory.

To the Church of Chriſt in *London*, with the General Aſſembly of Meſſengers, Elders, and Brethren, occaſionally meeting together to conſider of the Affairs of the Churches of Chriſt. *Salutation, &c.*

Brethren,

WHen I conſider how much it is your deſire, and the deſire of the Churches in general, that brotherly concord, peace and truth, might poſſeſs the room of all our diviſions, in affection, judgment, and practiſe; and particularly in the fourth principle of Chriſtianity. And how

many Prayers are daily made to God for ſo great a Bleſſing; And that hopeful way we lately ſeem'd to be in, to lay hold of the thing which hath been ſo long deſired: And therewithal that moſt unhappy obſtruction of our hopes (as ye know) ariſing from one who ſhould rather have been a reſtorer of the antient path which many have forſaken, and ſo a healer of the breach which hath been made, by its being neglected: Who being in reputation for Wiſdome, having therewithal great opportunity (and I am perſwaded really intended) to do the Church of Chriſt much good; Even then, by a little folly following his own Councels (doubtleſs through Satans malice, who envied our good) hath made himſelf and his enterpriſes obnoxious, and our wound more grievous.

I ſay, when I conſidered theſe things, I could not paſs them over without a Sigh, *(even this which here I preſent unto you) ſaying in my heart, Why hath the Lord done this? Which was no ſooner conceived, but I was immediately ſatisfied, that the Lord*

was

was jealous for his holy way, which had been groſly prophaned by an hypocritical conformity thereunto. And true for ever is that word, Hoſea 14. ult. All the wayes of the Lord are right, and the Juſt ſhall walk therein; But the Tranſgreſſor ſhall fall therein. *And certainly, as our Brethrens refuſing to ſeek the Lord after the due order at the firſt, ſo this prodigious hypocriſie at the laſt, may too truly be called* * Perrez Eccleſia *at this day.* The breach of the Church.

Thou Lord art righteous, thou knoweſt the Hearts of the children of men, and haſt diſcovered the hidden things thereof, and haſt pleaded the cauſe of thy precious (though much abuſed) Truth. Even ſo Lord let our iniquities be ever corrected, but yet in mercy forgive us our Treſpaſſes.

But what ſhall we ſay, ſhall we now no more go about this dreadfull work, to bring the Ark (the fourth principle of Chriſtianty I mean) to its proper place in the Churches?

ches? or rather ſome irregular Churches to their due reverence unto it.

If it ſeem good in the eyes of the Lord, let his ſervants ſtill convene to conſider of this matter, perhaps we ſhall find grace in his ſight; for there is hope that we ſhall one underſtand another, and with one conſent ſeek and ſerve the Lord God of our Fore-Fathers.

And this I am the more induced to believe or hope for, from, not only the great deſire which I yet find to be alive in the hearts of Chriſtians generally, that peace in this matter might be upon Iſrael. But alſo from the great forwardneſs which I found in the Searchers themſelves to conſent unto certain Propoſals for Peace; the firſt of which is this,

That it be granted and profeſſed on all ſides by the formerly divided parties, That that laying on of Hands, *Heb.* 6.2. is one of the Principles of Chriſts Doctrine, and a part of the foundation.

This

This Propoſition being conſidered, it may appear that there wants but a ſtep (as it were) to unity in the truth it ſelf, and ſo to a laſting Peace one with another. And methinks it ſhould be no impoſſible thing, for us to agree about the particular ſervice intended, Heb. 6. 2. *(unleſs a ſpirit of perverſneſs be mingled amongſt us) Towards the clearing of which difficulty, ſomething is ſaid in the ſequel, which I deſire may be conſidered.*

Why the Searchers ſhould ſo much declaim againſt you, as if you unchurched all Churches but your ſelves, I can ſee no reaſon, having never underſtood, that you did at any time by any agreement, deliver ſuch a Doctrine. Nor is it ſo much your buſineſs to meddle with unchurching any body, as to keep your ſelves from corruption in Doctrine and Manners.

Indeed the point of Communion with thoſe who reject or oppoſe your Faith and practice in the caſe depending, hath been much debated, and reſolved in the Negative (eſpecially touching the Table of the Lord) but

this is ſo far from being an Argument, that you deny them to be Churches of Chriſt, that it plainly Argues you own them for ſuch; but yet ſuch, as for their rejecting or oppoſing ſome truth of God, are therefore uncapable of preſent communion with thoſe that religiouſly obſerve the truth by them rejected and oppoſed. For if you deem them to be no Churches at all, what need any debate be had, Whether it be orderly or ſafe to communicate with them at the Lords Table?

Now, that perſons may be allowed the Appellation of Chriſtians (and ſo of the Church of Chriſt)—and yet (as the matter may be circumſtanced concerning them) ought to be held at ſome diſtance in reſpect of preſent Communion, with other Chriſtians, or Churches, implies no abſurdity, but is rather very neceſſary, I hope the enſuing diſcourſe will demonſtrate.

Something alſo I have ſaid in vindication of the Meſſengers Office (which I perceive to be much queſtioned by ſome) I confeſs my ſelf nothing ſo fit a perſon to plead

this

this cauſe as ſome other. However, if that which I have done may give occaſion to any other to do more, or more effectually, in this point, I ſhall think my pains well beſtowed. I commit all that I have ſaid to the bleſſing of God, and the Conſideration of his Churches.

Your Brother and Servant,

Tho. Grantham.

To

To the Authors of the BOOK, Intituled *A Search for Schism.*

Brethren,

WHen we consider how God is able to effect good things for his people by contrary wayes, even by turning the unkindness of Brethren into means of preservation to the family, Gen. 50. 20. we are made even against hope to believe in hope, that the product of your doings in your Search (and the Epistle prefixed) may be good, although its procedure in respect of its chief *Patriot*, was certainly from a mind filled with perturbation, and (its to be feared) with no

no ſmall emulation againſt ſome, for no other cauſe, then for their confidence and conſtancy in that, which by the *Viſion of Truth*, is made known for the good of the Church. For how is it credible that a pure fountain (or mind filled with Love and Peace) ſhould ever ſend forth ſuch dreadful ſtreams of ſlanders againſt the Church of God, as can hardly be paralelled in any Author? As if the Congregations of Chriſtians under impoſition of hands, *were invaders and uſurpers of the Lords peculiar Prerogative, ſuch as would irrevocably throw their fellow ſervants into Hell and death: Such as lock heaven-gate againſt the ſtricteſt piety of a diſſenting Brother*, and *open it wide to thoſe that are defective in Morals*. Such as *heat the Furnace ſeven times for thoſe which bow not to their dictates*: Such as *make Conſcience a make-bate*: Such as *kindle flames in Gods Houſe by Fire taken from the Altar*, and *bring the fatteſt Oblations to maintain that fire of Contention*: Such as

as *will rather fire the house of God, than dye without doing somewhat, which may perpetuate their names:* yea such as are *Sathans purveyers to bring prey to his den.* And (to make the measure run over and over) such as, *if they could execute all that they condemn, few or none could be saved!*

It is true, after all this, and much more of the same nature, you stroke us on the head, and tell us, though you thus speak, yet you are perswaded better things of the most of us; a narrow Plaister for so great a wound, being no more then must be said (if Charity bear any sway) of the manifold Sects which now profess Christianity, among whom there are many (who according to their Light) are pious, peaceable, and serious.

But alas, who will believe that many among us are good Christians, if it be true, that one part of our Churches consist of such as are notoriously known to be such as you have Characterized?

But what shall we say, shall we render railing

railing for railing? God forbid! for we are taught of God *to overcome evil with good*; nor will *we revenge our ſelves* by *recriminations*. And as we are confident that our *innocency* will in theſe things greatly plead againſt you; ſo we truſt there are no ſuch impieties, and execrable doers among you, if this your *Search* have not *tinctured you.*

The Lord knoweth, *and Iſrael ſhall know*, that if we knew any ſuch evil workers in our Congregations, they ſhould either reform or go to their place, and if you know any ſuch, you might have done well to have ſingled them out, that we might have known them by name, and not have thus ſold us into the hands of Scorners, to be a deriſion to the fooliſh, *Prov.* 12. 18. *There is that ſpeaketh like the piercings of a Sword, but the tongue of the wiſe is health.*

Nor do we doubt but that many of you are meerly enſnared in the publication of your Epiſtle, and it is ſtrange you

you ſhould imply his pen in this matter, whom you knew to be too much entangled in the folly of his own wayes (at that time) to be truly ſerviceable to God and his People, whatever he hath been in time paſt.

What is here written, now offers it ſelf to your conſideration, as a thing compelled from us at this time, by your high provocation, well knowing it to be more ſuitable to the time, and the ſtate of the Church in general, to be ſtudying for terms of reconciliation, then Arguments for Diſputation; and therefore we could wiſh that Chriſtians would not thus put one another to buſineſs, ſeeing they do bear (and are like to bear) in their body the Marks of the Lord Jeſus, according to that ſaying, *Gal.* 6. 17.

Nor was it needful to ſet down your demands in this our Anſwer, partly for that the ſubſtance may be underſtood by what we have ſaid, and partly for

that

that you have made your Book ſo publick, as that it is (as it were) in every Brothers hand, who therefore when he ſees this Anſwer, may compare it with your Search, for his own ſatisfaction.

Your Brother,

Tho. Grantham.

A Sigh for Peace:

OR,

The cauſe of Diviſion diſcovered, &c.

IT is certainly an eaſie thing (*though very pernicious*) to fill the Church of Chriſt with *Queſtions*; and ſuch too, as may carry a ſhew of ſtrength againſt the moſt important Articles of our Faith. But it is not ſo eaſie for thoſe who are ſick of Queſtions or *demands*, to receive ſatisfaction by any endeavour whatſoever. And as in

other points of faith; the Queſtions of ſome have been endleſs; even ſo now that humour hath been and is much at work, againſt that ſolemn ſervice of prayer, with the impoſition of hands for the promiſed Spirit of God, as a gift pertaining to the members of the body of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. As is too apparent by ſundry papers extant, and among the reſt, one entituled, *A Search for Schiſm*, containing no leſs than an hundred Demands (though 40 only be the number ſet down by the Demandants) which are the more prodigeous for that divers of them have been anſwered, by divers hands, and no reply made by the enquirers. What the reaſon hereof ſhould be is doubtful, unleſs the oppoſers of this truth intend to ſtate the Controverſie anew (for I was told that this Book of Demands is but a preparatory to a greater work) and thereby become (more effectually) the diſturbers and obſtructers of that meaſure of unity remaining, and peace pretended.

But as in this we ſhall be too ſolicitous, ſo, neither in our Anſwer, ſhall we need to be voluminous, by tracing their demands one by one. For though the number thereof be many, yet they are reducible to three Heads, touching which the truth being evinced, the whole Body of their demands are anſwered.

Now

Now the Heads to which their demands may be reduced are theſe:

The firſt, concerns the conſtitution of thoſe Congregations of Baptized Diſciples who reject that ſolemn ſervice of prayer with impoſition of hands for the promiſed Spirit: *viz.* Whether they be true Churches of Chriſt or not?

The ſecond, reſpecteth the matter of Communion between thoſe Chriſtians who religiouſly obſerve prayer with the impoſition of hands, as a principle of Chriſts Doctrine, pertaining to the beginning of Chriſtian men; and theſe who reject and oppoſe it.

The third, is touching the ſervice it ſelf, in reſpect of its grounds and ends; as alſo in reſpect of the perſons concerned in the practice thereof at this day.

That I may with the more facility and clearneſs proceed in the conſideration of theſe particulars, I ſhall begin with the laſt firſt; touching which particular, I ſhall endeavour to make good this propoſition, *viz.*

That as God hath promiſed to give the Spirit of his Son (or his holy Spirit) to all that are the called of the Lord: So he hath appointed a ſolemn way wherein his Servants and Handmaids, generally, are to wait upon him for the reception thereof, which way is the prayers of the Church (performed

by her Miniſters) with the laying on of hands, and this as a principle of Chriſtian Religion, belonging to them in the minority of their Chriſtian ſtate.

For explication of ſome parts of this Propoſition, it is meet that we ſhew, firſt, what we mean by the holy Ghoſt, ſith ſome now, (as well as heretofore *Acts* 19.—) either by reaſon of ignorance or ſome worſe cauſe, ſeem not to know, *whether there be any holy Ghoſt*. As if they had forgotten unto what they were Baptized. *Matth.* 28. 19.

By the Holy Ghoſt then, we do not mean the Spirit of man in its moſt reformed and elevated ſtate imaginable; neither any created Spirit whatſoever.

But by the Holy Ghoſt, we mean that Spirit, by whoſe operation the Creation of the world was brought forth, and formed. *Gen.* 1. 2. *Job* 26. 13. And which knoweth all things, even the deep things of God, 1 *Cor.* 2. 10. And which is preſent every where, *Pſal.* 139. 7, 8, 9. Which Spirit we therefore believe to be one with the Father in nature and eſſence, and therefore rightly ſaid to be God, *Acts* 5. 3, 4, 9.

Secondly, when we ſpeak of mens receiving this holy Spirit, we do not mean that he dwels in them eſſentially and perſonally; for ſo

ſo they cannot contain him. But he dwels in them by manifeſtation and operation. By gifts, according to 1 *Cor.* 12. By fruits, according to 1 *Cor.* 13. 4, 5, 6, 7. *Galath.* 5. 22, 23.

And ſeeing the ground of this ſo much neglected truth, the fourth principle of Chriſts doctrine, lieth much in that great promiſe of the Spirit of God, as the right of all the Diſciples of Chriſt. It behoveth that we open the nature of that glorious promiſe, that being affected with the excellency, and made ſenſible of the neceſſitie thereof, we may the more devoutly ſeek for it, not only in our private devotion, but alſo in that ſpecial and publick way aſſigned in the holy Scripture for the obtaining ſo great a benefit.

Let it therefore firſt be conſidered, that to be under the common influence and operation of the Spirit, in the Miniſtery of the Word, in order to converſion, is one thing; and the reception of the Holy Ghoſt, as a Seal and confirmation of the ſouls of Chriſtians, as it is the earneſt of their inheritance, is another.

It is certain, a perſon may be eminently under the operation of the Spirit, in the firſt conſideration; and yet be a ſtranger to the reception of the Spirit in the other; as appeared

peared first in the Apostles themselves, who though they were the persons which received the first fruits of the promised Holy Spirit, yet were they for some time in the profession of the Gospel before they received it.

For they did not receive the Spirit of promise till after the Ascention of our Lord, *Acts* 1. 4, 5. — *But wait for the promise of the father, which (saith he) ye have heard of me; for John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many dayes hence.* John 7. 39. *The Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.* In like manner the Samaritans were converted from the errour of their way, by the preaching of the word, and became the Disciples of Christ, and yet the *Spirit of promise was fallen on none of them,* Acts 8. 12, 15, 16. The Ephesians also believed in God after they heard the Gospel of their salvation; But *were not sealed with the holy Spirit of promise till afterward,* Eph. 1. 13, 14. Agreeable hereunto is that question of the Apostle, *Acts* 19. 2. *Have ye received the Holy Ghost SINCE ye believed?* The persons to whom this question was put, were believers in Christ, yea Baptized believers. Whence we are to note, that Baptized Disciples have right to the promise of the Holy Ghost; and indeed hence it

was

was that *Peter* could ſo confidently and univerſally promiſe (in the word of the Lord) the gift of the Holy Ghoſt *to every one that doth repent of their iniquities, and are baptized in the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt for the remiſſion of their ſins*, Acts 2.38. It appeareth therefore, that perſons may be under the operation of the ſpirit of God in the Miniſterie of the Word, to their *illumination* and *converſion*, ſo far as to be brought into *a certain ſtate of Chriſtianity*, (for thoſe that may be called *Diſciples* are called *Chriſtians*, Acts 11.26.) and yet be without the enjoyment of the ſealing and confirming ſpirit of promiſe, *in themſelves*, which is yet more evident, from *John* 14.16, 17. *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter — even the Spirit of TRUTH — for he dwelleth WITH you, and SHALL be IN you.* Note well, this promiſe doth not reſpect the ſpirit, as it worketh *Miracles*, only; but alſo, and indeed much more, the Spirit as it *is a Leader into all Truth*, called therefore *the Spirit of Truth*, yea, 'tis the Spirit in ſuch wiſe as *ſhould abide with, and in the Saints for ever*; yea, it is the *Comforter*, or Spirit of Comfort, and is therefore that gift of the Spirit which pertaineth to Chriſtians generally.

Secondly, That this *ſealing* and *confirming*

Spirit of promiſe belongs to Chriſts Diſciples generally, whether male or female, I conceive ſome neceſſity to demonſtrate, becauſe the *Searchers*, to the intent, that at the leaſt they may exclude *women* from the benefit of prayer, with the laying on of Hands, will not have them included in the word *THEM*, Acts 8. 17. but if we prove, that *women* have right to the promiſe equally with *men*, we ſhall not at all fear the trifling demands of the *Searchers* in their 29 Querie, which only ſerves, to ſhew the weakneſs of their cauſe, for it ſeems if it be true, that *women* (as well as men) had Hands impoſed on them with Prayer, by the Apoſtles, for the Holy Spirit; then their cavils againſt the *univerſality of the practice of laying on of Hands is* (at leaſt) *the leſs conſiderable*. Now that the promiſe of the Spirit extends to *Chriſtian women as well as men*, appeareth from the Prophets foreſight of the extent thereof, *Iſa.* 44. 3. *I will powr water upon him that is thirſt, and floods upon the dry ground, I will powr my Spirit upon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing upon their off-ſpring.* Joel 2. *And it ſhall come to paſs afterward, that I will powr out my Spirit upon all fleſh — and upon the ſervants, and upon the Handmaid in thoſe dayes, will I powr out of my Spirit.* Which glorious promiſe was firſt fulfilled to the Chriſtians, ſoon after the Aſſen-

tion

tion of our Lord, *Acts* 2. And now is the time, as well as then, for Chriſtians to reap the fruit of that promiſe, *Acts* 5. 32. — *the holy Ghoſt which God hath given to them that obey him. Becauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts.* Gal. 4. 6. *In Jeſus Chriſt there is neither male nor female, but if ye be Chriſts then are ye Abrahams ſeed, and Heirs according to promiſe.* It is the Spirit of promiſe which doth witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God. And again, *He that ſtabliſheth us in Chriſt, and hath anointed us is God, who alſo hath ſealed us, and given the earneſt of the Spirit in our Hearts.* Yea this, even this Spirit, is one of the great and *precious promiſes* by which Chriſtians are made partakers of the Divine Nature, according to 2 *Pet.* 1, 3, 4. Thus we ſee that the Scriptures do evince, that the *Handmaids* as well as the *ſervants* of the Lord; that *the Children of God without exception*; that *the Church of God without rejection of any true Member thereof, have a clear indubitate right to the gift of the holy Spirit.* And it is alſo evident that the promiſe of the Spirit, conſiſts not only, no, nor chiefly in thoſe gifts, which ſome ſay are now ceaſed, to wit, of Miracles, Tongues, &c. (*though they have no Scripture for it*) But this promiſe chiefly conſiſts *in the ſanctifying graces, and ſaul-*

eſtabliſh-

eſtabliſhing comforts thereof, yea in that which *ſealeth* a Chriſtian *to the day of redemption* (which tongues and miracles will fail to do) and in the mean time is *like water to him that is thirſty*, as before we have ſeen. 'Tis that *Unction which* the holy one which *teacheth Chriſtians all things*, or *Leads them into all truth.* In a word, it is that reception of the Spirit which *is above all gifts* of Tongues, Propheſies &c. called *Charity*, and is branched into *meekneſs, temperance, goodneſs and faith*, yea, 'tis that gift of the Spirit by which the *Love of God is ſhed abroad in the hearts of Chriſtians*, being the Spirit of *Love, power, and a ſound mind* in the exerciſe whereof (I mean this gift of the Spirit) a Chriſtian is both *accepted of God and approved of men.* So then we have the glorious promiſe of the Spirit remaining for, and pertaining to the *Handmaids* and *ſervants* of the Lord, in the moſt excellent gifts thereof as much as ever, and conſequently are as much concerned to ſeek for it as ever any was, and this leads me to the ſecond branch of my Propoſition, *viz. The dutiful obſervance of that way which is allowed and confirmed from Heaven for obtaining that heavenly donation.* ——

That God ſhould by his *Prophets* foretell of *ſuch grace*, and ſo often mention it as *ſo great a promiſe*; the reception whereof *is ſo neceſſary*

as without which Christians do want the *lively evidence, seal & confirmation that they are the Sons of God, and heirs with Christ*; & not assign some *peculiar way*, and *special means*, for all that are concern'd, to make use of in order to their obtaining it, seems not to be credible; which yet he hath not done, if prayer with imposition of Hands by the Church (or her delegates) be rejected; if otherwise, it were well if some body would assign us what peculiar way the word of God directs us to, as being that which God hath ratified from heaven, as a means peculiar for that end and purpose; which if any assay to shew us, Let them also consider why the Apostles took that way which is so much neglected by our Brethren, if there were any other particular means and way to be used for the end aforesaid? But if it be said that no special way or means is left us, but the general Ordinance of prayer; *&c.* We must then say, it is not like the dealings of God in other cases; for ordinarily when it pleased God to promise or give some special favour or gift unto his Church, he therewithall ordered some solemn service to keep in memory that his favour, and to be a means to partake of the fruit of his promise: Thus the Covenant which God made with *Abraham* and his seed, the deliverance which he wrought

for

for them, the great things which he promiſed them, muſt be perpetuated, and waited for, in the uſe of ſuch wayes, as in the wiſedome of God, were thought fit for the memorial or reception of theſe favours reſpectively. And ſo muſt the remiſſion of our ſins by the death of Chriſt, be ſought for, and ſignified, not only by the word and prayer, in general; but particularly, in the Baptiſme of of repentance, for the remiſſion of our ſins alſo. Nor muſt we only receive the fleſh and blood of Chriſt, by the word preached, but particularly, in the ſolemn uſe of the Table of the Lord alſo. In like manner, we are not only to ſeek to God for his Spirit in the conſtant and ordinary courſe of Prayer, but alſo in a ſpecial and peculiar way of Prayer, allowed and confirmed from Heaven, for that very end and purpoſe, which is the point to be demonſtrated according to what the Scriptures in that behalf doth teach us.

And firſt from that place, *Acts* 8. 14, 15, 16, 17. *Now when the Apoſtles which were at Jeruſalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they ſent unto them Peter and John who when they were come down prayed for them that they might receive the holy Ghoſt — then laid they their hands on them and they received the holy Ghoſt.* For the better underſtanding of this place, it is meet to conſider that ſuch as pray

to

to God, ought to know that the thing which they pray for is attainable; and that they know it is the will of God that they ſhould ask of him that very thing which they pray for, *eſpecially when the prayer is made poſitively*; I mean, *without conditional expreſſions*, as in the caſe before us the prayer is ſuch, as indeed it ought to be without doubting, when we ask of God thoſe gifts which he hath promiſed. *James* 1. 5, 6, 7. But if by the holy Ghoſt in this place, be meant only the extraordinarie gifts thereof, ſuch as *Tongues*, *Miracles*, &c. Then certainly there was no ground from any promiſe of God, to pray *that all thoſe perſons which were Baptized in Samaria, ſhould ſo receive the Spirit.* No, nor any ground from any promiſe of God to pray for ſo much *as any one particular perſon among them all*, ſith the Promiſe of God in that caſe, is not made to this or that man or woman by name; and conſequently here was no ground for the Apoſtles to pray *abſolutely* and *believingly*, but rather *doubtingly*, for that very thing which they purpoſely prayed for. Seeing it is evident that not all the members of a Church, but rather very few (and them alſo unknown by name to any man, no not to the Apoſtles themſelves. 1 *Cor.* 12. 11, 29. *Acts* 1. 24.) are choſen to be Prophets, workers of miracles, &c. And therefore it followeth that there could be no ſuch

laying

laying on of hands at all practiſed here, as ſome imagine, namely a laying on of hands for the extraordinary gifts of the holy Ghoſt. For though it is true, that God did ſometimes give ſuch gifts of his Spirit in the way of Praier with laying on of Hands, yet that ſuch gifts was the only proper end of that ſervice, is confidently denied, becauſe (as before) it was impoſſible to know (in any ordinarie way) for whom to pray, or on whom to impoſe Hands, whether on men or women, ſeeing neither ſex is exempted from the extraordinarie gifts of the Spirit.

It is certain that God gave the gift of Tongues, *&c.* in the Miniſterie of the Word. *Acts* 10. Yet it doth not follow thence, that ſuch gifts are the only proper end of preaching the Word; but the undoubted end of the Lord, in that Ordinance is, *that men believe, and be ſaved* (though perhaps they never receive the gift of tongues, propheſie, *&c.*) and this is certainly that end which ſhall be attained by all that rightly accept that means of ſalvation. *John* 20. 31. Theſe things are written that ye might believe, and in believing that ye may have life through his name.

Nor will *Acts* 19. 6. prove that there is, or *ever was any ſuch thing as laying on of Hands for the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit only*, for ſtill

ſtill we muſt diſtinguiſh between an *effect only*, and that which is *the undoubted end* of any ſervice. The reaſons even now urged, do forbid us to ſay, that tongues, miracles, *&c.* was the undoubted or preciſe end of laying on of Hands, *Acts 19.* becauſe the ſervice was univerſal; but extraordinarie gifts are particular only; And let it be ſeriouſly conſidered, that if *Paul* had found *twelve hundred* men inſtead of *twelve* who *had not receiv'd the holy Ghoſt ſince they believed*, ought he not to have done that to them all which he did to theſe? Doubtleſs he ought; yet who can imagine, that ſuch gifts as Tongues, Miracles, *&c.* ſhould be given to each individual? This would be far from that order which God hath beautified his Church withall. 1 *Cor.* 12. 29,30. And whereas *Paul* in this place, and *Peter* and *John* in *Acts* 8. is conceived by ſome of our oppoſites, to have impoſed hands to work Miracles for confirmation of the Word, this is a very great miſtake, for then there is no reaſon to imagine that the practice of laying on of hands ſhould have been general (as doubtleſs it was.) For ſeeing that the healing of one Cripple *Acts* 4. 16. was ſufficient to convince open enemies that the power of God was with his Apoſtles, Then ſurely it was not neceſſarie that all the Baptized ſhould miraculouſly ſpeak with tongues,

tongues, for to convince themſelves or others, that the Word which they had received was from heaven. But alas, men fall into this errour, by their unwillingneſs to ſee the truth, for ſignes are not for them that believe; and Miracles had been wrought by *Philip* at *Samaria, to confirm the word*, before *Peter* and *John* came there. *Acts* 8. 6, 7. and all that we read of *Peter* and *John* in reſpect of confirming the Word, is only this, that they teſtified and preached it, and departed *verſ.* 25.

Now that all the Diſciples at Samaria had Hands impoſed on them, cannot without abſurdity be denied, for certainly *they impoſed hands on all, in whoſe behalf they prayed*; but will anyman ſay that they prayed but for ſome of them only, that they might receive the promiſe of the Father, and that all the reſt muſt be excluded both from the prayer, and the gift prayed for? Surely ſuch a conceit would make *Peter* and *John* miſerable comforters to thoſe Diſciples, whom they ſhould thus neglect in their prayers for the holy Spirit; as all the women which were Baptized were ſo neglected, in the opinion of the Searchers, for they by their demands will needs ſuppoſe, that the Apoſtles did not impoſe hands on women, as if women had not as clear a right to the promiſed Spirit as men! They might as well have

have doubted whether *Peter* and *John* laid hands on men, seeing the Text sayes nothing particularly of them any more than of the women. But I say these imaginations are very irrational, sith (as before) it was not known to *Peter* or *John*, what persons by name should have extraordinary gifts, whether the *Servants* or *Handmaids* of the Lord, nor whether any of them should be Prophets or speakers with tongues. But this they knew, that the gift of the Holy Ghost belonged to them all (*for so they had preached to others*, Acts 2. 38.) and therefore certainly they prayed for all to whom the promise did belong; and then doubtless for whom they prayed, on them they laid their hands, and so it is evident they laid their hands on all. The same may be noted from *Pauls* question *Acts* 19. 2. *Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?* Where certainly he includeth the whole number of these certain Disciples, who (by their answer to the question) being all discovered to be wanting in respect of that great gift of God; *Paul* must needs be very partial, if he had not the same care for all, that he had for some, and if his care was equally for them all, then reason tels us he would not be wanting to any of them in his endeavours, that they might receive that Spirit which as

they had not received. So that ſtill we ſee, laying on of Hands was practiſed as generally as Baptiſm, or any other Ordinance, where the practiſe of it is recorded, and that is an evidence that the end of that ſervice was that gift of the Holy Ghoſt which is general, and conſequently not for the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, otherwiſe then as they are included within the compaſs of that gracious promiſe.

That the laying on of Hands, *Acts* 8. *Acts* 19. was not the laying on of Hands for extraordinarie gifts, but for the general donation of the Spirit to Diſciples indifferently, is yet more manifeſt; becauſe upon this only ground could *Paul* ask the Diſciples, whether they had received the Holy Ghoſt ſince they believed; and upon this only ground may the Miniſters of Chriſt ask this queſtion of the Diſciples at this day, I mean ſo to ask it, as thereby implying that they ought to have it, for ſo much *Paul*'s queſtion doth plainly imply, as appears by his endeavours that they (who had been ſo long without it) might now be made partakers of it, and that for them all indifferently. And upon this ground only could *Peter* and *John* uſe the means to obtain the Spirit for the Diſciples at Samaria generally, namely becauſe the promiſe of the Spirit was univerſal.

Again

Again from this conſideration, that that laying on of Hands *Acts* 8. *Acts* 19. was a *general practiſe*, and the gift prayed for in that ſervice, *a general gift*, it will follow that the Apoſtles performed this ſervice of prayer with laying on of Hands, by vertue of their Miniſterial Authoritie, and not by vertue of any particular *power they had to give the Holy Ghoſt*, as ſome do vainly imagine, otherwiſe it will follow, that by their gift of miracles they were bound to work a miracle for every Diſciple at Samaria; and for every one of thoſe certain diſciples at Epheſus, * which is abſurd to imagine, or elſe that they did in this ſervice more than they were bound to do either by vertue of gift or office, which is as ridiculous on the other hand; for though it is certain that they had no power to give the Spirit of God to any man; yet certainly they had power (or authoritie from God) to pray, with the laying on of their Hands, for the members of the bodie, that they might receive the Spirit of promiſe, as appeared by thoſe heavenly confirmations which enſued upon their performance, inſomuch as that it may be ſaid, this ſervice of

* And then why not the like for all Diſciples where ever they came, no man can render a good reaſon.

prayer with the laying on of hands is as much confirmed from heaven, to be a thing well pleasing to him, as any other ordinance whatsoever.

And forasmuch as the *UNIVERSALITY* of the practice of layng on of Hands, with prayer for the Holy Spirit, being evinced is a matter of that importance, that even thence it will follow, thatit is no such thing as manyimagine it to be (*viz. a temporary practice only fitted for the Apostles times, that some few having practised or submitted to it, It was to cease, being only performed for the gift of tongues and miracles*, &c.) I will therefore proceed a little further to demonstrate this service to be very universal.

It may appear to all indifferent men, that very many thousands were in the religious practise of this ministration in the first Churches. And first from the state of the Church at *Samaria* in its plantation, where the number of Disciples was very great, in likelihood not less than *an hundred thousand*, as may be gathered from *Acts* 8. *vers.* 14. It is said, *Samaria had received the word*; and *vers.* 8. There was great joy in that City. Which expressions, that they include each individual, I will not affirm; for, if they import the generality of the inhabitants (as that will

will appear) it ſufficeth for my purpoſe. This is evident, partly for that we hear not of ſo much as one perſon, who oppoſed himſelf againſt *Philip*'s preaching in that City. No not ſo much as *Simon* the *Sorcerer*, for he conſented to *Philip*'s doctrine. And partly, for that there is the ſame reaſon to believe, that *the whole City* (or the generality thereof) *was converted by Philip, as that they had been generally deceived by Simon the Witch* (as that will not be denied) for as it is ſaid *verſ.* 9. He *bewitched them*, to wit, the people of *Samaria*; which is interpreted of all, or the generality. *Verſ.* 11. *To him they had regard, from the leaſt even to the greateſt of them.* So on the other hand it is ſaid, *verſ.* 5. That *Philip* went down to *Samaria*, and preached *Chriſt* to them, *i. e.* all, or the generality of them; as it is rationally gathered from *verſ.* 6. *And the people* WITH ONE ACCORD, *gave heed to thoſe things which Philip ſpake, hearing and ſeeing the miracles which he did.*

Hence we may perceive, a very general (if not an univerſal) converſion of this City; who, Like as in times paſt they gave regard to the *Sorcerer*, both the leaſt and greateſt of them; But now, with ONE ACCORD, they gave heed to what *Philip* ſpake; even ſo, *verſ.* 12. it is ſaid of the very

prayer with the laying on of hands is as much confirmed from heaven, to be a thing well pleasing to him, as any other ordinance whatsoever.

And forasmuch as the *UNIVERSALITY* of the practice of layng on of Hands, with prayer for the Holy Spirit, being evinced is a matter of that importance, that even thence it will follow, thatit is no such thing as manyimagine it to be (*viz. a temporary practice only fitted for the Apostles times, that some few having practised or submitted to it, It was to cease, being only performed for the gift of tongues and miracles*, &c.) I will therefore proceed a little further to demonstrate this service to be very universal.

It may appear to all indifferent men, that very many thousands were in the religious practise of this ministration in the first Churches. And first from the state of the Church at *Samaria* in its plantation, where the number of Disciples was very great, in likelihood not less than *an hundred thousand*, as may be gathered from *Acts* 8. *vers.* 14. It is said, *Samaria had received the word*; and *vers.* 8. There was great joy in that City. Which expressions, that they include each individual, I will not affirm; for, if they import the generality of the inhabitants (as that will

will appear) it ſufficeth for my purpoſe. This is evident, partly for that we hear not of ſo much as one perſon, who oppoſed himſelf againſt *Philip*'s preaching in that City. No not ſo much as *Simon* the *Sorcerer*, for he conſented to *Philip*'s doctrine. And partly, for that there is the ſame reaſon to believe, that *the whole City* (or the generality thereof) *was converted by Philip, as that they had been generally deceived by Simon the Witch* (as that will not be denied) for as it is ſaid *verſ.* 9. He *bewitched them*, to wit, the people of *Samaria*; which is interpreted of all, or the generality. *Verſ.* 11. *To him they had regard, from the leaſt even to the greateſt of them.* So on the other hand it is ſaid, *verſ.* 5. That *Philip* went down to *Samaria*, and preached *Chriſt* to them, *i. e.* all, or the generality of them; as it is rationally gathered from *verſ.* 6. *And the people WITH ONE ACCORD, gave heed to thoſe things which Philip ſpake, hearing and ſeeing the miracles which he did.*

Hence we may perceive, a very general (if not an univerſal) converſion of this City; who, Like as in times paſt they gave regard to the *Sorcerer*, both the leaſt and greateſt of them; But now, with *ONE ACCORD*, they gave heed to what *Philip* ſpake; even ſo, *verſ.* 12. it is ſaid of the very

ſame people without exception, that *when they beleeved Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jeſus Chriſt, they were baptized.*

And that there might be no cauſe to doubt, whether the account given, be ſo general, as the terms already noted may imply; it is added by way of explication, *both Men and Women.* Yea further, as the *deceived City* is now recorded to be converted, ſo the very *deceiver* himſelf is brought in as *believing and baptized, verſ.* 13. We have therefore not only a *general* or *indefinite* account of the Diſciples at Samaria, but what is generally or indefinitely delivered in the words, *Samaria received the Word,* &c. is ſufficiently *deſined* to be meant of *the people with one accord.* Of the *Deceiver*, and *them that had been deceived.* Of the people of both *Sexes*, to wit, *both men and women.* And upon thoſe very perſons, it is ſaid (without the leaſt intimation of any exception of any perſon or perſons whatſoever) the Apoſtles laid their hands, after *they had prayed for them, that they might receive the holy Ghoſt, for as yet he was faln on none of them.* Note [on none of them] wherefore they prayed for them all. Therefore they impoſed Hands on them all.

Now

Now, ſuppoſe that the City of Samaria, would afford but three hundred thouſand inhabitants capable of inſtruction, if then I do allow two parts out of three, yet there remains 100000 Converts probably; however infallibly a great multitude. To whom we may well add (as a people owning the doctrine of impoſition of Hands) the *Church at Jeruſalem*, which conſiſted of many thouſands, by whom *Peter* and *John* was ſent to *Samaria*, and it were impious to think, that they would now *innovate* a ſervice in the worſhip of God at *Samaria*, which was not before received, in the *Church* that ſent them thither. But this ſervice is numbred among the *principles of the Hebrew Church*, and found practiſed in the *Church at Epheſus*; whence it appears, this miniſtration was as univerſal as other Ordinances in the primitive Churches. Ergo, *it was for the general gift of the Spirit*. Ergo, *not for the extraordinary gifts only*.

Nor doth that Text, *Deut.* 34. 9. *alledged by the Searchers*, prove the contrary; for it is not only ſaid, that *Joſhua* was full of the *Spirit of wiſedome, for Moſes had laid his hands on him*, &c. which ſeems to be no more, then what *Timothy* received by the *laying on of Paul's hands (viz.) the Spirit of —— a ſound minde or judgement*, which may be received

where the miraculous gifts of the Spirit are wanting. Doubtleſs, it may be ſaid without boaſting, that ſome Chriſtians in theſe days, are ſo endewed with the Spirit of God (at leaſt in compariſon of many of the Lords ſervants) that, *they are full of the Spirit of wiſedom*; yet the Searchers will not ſay, *they are full of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit*: ſeeing they have told us (though very untruly) that the end of laying on of Hands, *Act.* 8. *Acts* 19. is ceaſed, or not attainable; which they conceive *was only the miraculous gifts of the Spirit.* Which conceit of theirs is the more prodigious, when we conſider that ſome of them did lately ſubmit to laying on of Hands, with prayer to God. But I marvail with what conſcience, if indeed he was of this minde, *that the end of that ſervice was not attainable.*

It is worthy conſideration, that there was a Church at Epheſus, long before *Paul* laid hands on thoſe certain Diſciples, which he found there, at his ſecond comming to that City. *Acts* 18. 19, 20, 26, 27. So that the word of God had been confirmed there for many years; *Priſcilla* and *Aquilla* having been left there, who taught ſuch as were ignorant, the way of the Lord more perfectly. *Apollos* alſo, mightily convinced the Jews by

by the Scriptures, that Jesus was the Christ; we cannot now reasonably think, that *Paul* would settle those certain Disciples *Acts* 19. in a Church distinct from the Church at *Ephesus* already, much less in a way or practise *contradistinct* from the Church; and if not, then it follows, that the Church at *Ephesus* were also in the practise of prayer, with the laying on of Hands, as well as those certain Disciples, who were now to be laid into the building with the rest; which yet is the more considerable, if we note that passage in *Ephesians* 1. 13. which was spoken of the whole Church at *Ephesus*, and shews plainly, that they had received the Holy Ghost or Spirit of Promise, after they believed the Gospel of their salvation; which fully agree with the order, wherein the certain Disciples also received the Spirit.

And here let us not omit that passage, *Act.* 22. 10. & 9. 17. Whence it is observable, *that Paul, the elect vessel*, must be sent to *Damascus*, to be taught the principles or rudiments of Religion by * *Ananias*, and particularly in the Doctrine of Baptism, and laying on of Hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, not only in repect of the miraculous

* And yet it is true, which *Paul* saith *Gal.* 1. 11, 12, 15, 16. for the substance of the Gospel was revealed to him, before *Ananias* came at him.

lous gifts of Tongues, &c. (For it is a doubt (among Chriſtians) whether he ſpake with tongues, by vertue of any proper gift) or by means of his education.) But the ſpirit of love, power, and of a ſecond mind, which he affirms God had given him, 2 *Tim.* 1. 7. And though it is true, there was ſome variaition in the order of things in *Paul*'s caſe; that is no prejudice to the truth in general, there being an emergency which might occaſion it, and a ſpecial allowance from heaven for it at that time. Nor may this variation be a preſident for us, to vary in things of this nature, having no ſuch occaſion for it, any more than the *Iſraelites* eating the Paſſover, without being cleanſed, according to the purification of the Sanctuary; when an emergency called for it, and the Lord allowed it, gave them ground to do ſo again, when there was neither the one nor the other; nor is it material againſt ought that we have ſaid, that *Ananias was no officer in the Church, and therefore impoſed Hands on Paul by vertue of his gift only.* For unleſs we imagine the Church to have greater power than God, we cannot deny *Ananias* to have authority, for all that he ſaid and did to *Saul.* Seeing he had immediate miſſion from heaven, which is equivolent to the

the Churches miſſion at leaſt; Nor is it reaſonable to think, that power to act in Goſpel Ordinances, is ſo tied to the Church, as that God may not anticipate that Order when it pleaſeth him.

And as this choſen veſſel was taught the rudiments of Chriſtianity, ſo he inſtructed others in the ſame, as we have ſeen in part, and may ſee yet further, in his writing to *Timothy*; who being under ſome fears and temptations, he labours to comfort him, from the conſideration of the Spirit which God had given him; which was the Spirit of love, power, and of a ſound mind, which he reminds him of, by mentioning the means uſed for obtaining it, which was the putting on of *Paul*'s hands. See and conſider, 2 *Tim.* 1. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

We are now come to the great Charter of the Church, for this point of Faith; I mean, that Epiſtle which *Paul* wrote unto the *Hebrew* Church; who, as he himſelf had learned and taught others, concerning the laying on of Hands, as we have ſeen before, ſo he puts the firſt of Goſpel Churches in mind, of that which they (who were to be as a ſtandard to the reſt) had been taught, in reſpect of their principles as Chriſtians. *Heb.* 5. 12. and particularly, concerning laying

on

on of Hands, *Heb.* 6. 2. Concerning which particular, as I shall have too much occasion to note the differing opinions among the Baptized Congregations, so I shall first set down those things wherein they do generally agree, or rather, that which is granted by the Searchers. And first,

They grant, that *the doctrine of the Holy Ghost* (I suppose they mean the Promise of the Holy Ghost) *was frequently taught as a principle of the Christian faith*; and they give us no reason, why it ought not with like frequency to be taught, as a principle of the same Faith now.

Secondly they grant, *That that laying on of hands*, Heb. 6. 2. *is a principle of the doctrine of Christ, and a part of the foundation* *. Now, either they must grant that these two, to wit, the promise of the Spirit, and laying on of Hands, with prayer to obtain it, makes but one principle of Christianity, or else they fall into that which they condemn; *viz.* the making seven principles. But to say the truth, they seem to make these two to be but one; yet so, as that they would destroy the practick part. For they demand, whether laying on of Hands, *Heb.* 6. 2.

* Which they said to me, they did alwayes grant, or else I had not mentioned it in this book.

6. 2. *may not be figuratively underſtood, for the Holy Spirit which was given thereby?* But the Anſwer is eaſie, and tells them plainly, that this is the way to have ſuch a figurative foundation, as Babes in Chriſt could never underſtand; and then will come in *a figurative Baptiſm* only. Yea a *figurative Reſurrection* too, would creep into the Church, at the heels of the other *figures*; till at laſt, the truth of all the principles would ſtand only for a *Cypher.*

But the inſtance, which the Searchers bring to ſtrengthen this their *figurative interpretation*, very providentially overthrows it. For, though the *Cup is taken for the Wine*, and the *Bread and Wine, for the Body and Blood of Chriſt*; yet we know that the ſign, and thing ſignified, do both remain; for the uſe and comfort of the Church; and why then ſhould prayer, with the laying on of Hands (which is the ſign) be made void by the promiſe of the Spirit, which is the ſubſtance. Theſe things premiſed, the Searchers twenty fifth demand, and the diſcourſe thereon depending is diſcerned to be frivolous. Becauſe whatſoever they are pleaſed to write, *it is certainly known that their opinion is contrary to that writing.* Otherwiſe it were eaſie to ſhew, not only

only *the Novelty of their conceit* in the ſaid Queſtion, but the *vanity of ſuch an interpretation of the word foundation*, as there they bring, might be diſcovered. For evident it is, that the ſame which is called, the firſt principles of the Oracles of God, and milk for Babes, *verſ.* 12. is called the principles of the doctrine of Chriſt [which pertain to the beginning of Chriſtian men] which now the Author would intermit; and the foundation, which he would not lay again; which foundation when he comes to ſet down in its parts; which principles, when he comes to enumerate, are thus ſet forth; of Repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God. Of the doctrine of Baptiſm, and of laying on of Hands. Of the Reſurrection of the dead, and of Eternal judgement.

And what though it be ſaid, that other foundations can no man lay, than that which is already laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt; doth this prejudice that uſe of the word foundation, *Heb.* 6. 1. not at all. Or at leaſt not any more than the Church, being called Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. and the pillar and ground [or foundation] of the truth; 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. doth prejudice the Son of God, his being called Chriſt, or the foundation. And are not the Prophets and Apoſtles called the founda-

tion,

tion; *Ephes.* 2. 20. of which Christ in the same place is said to be the corner stone? And yet surely Christians of ordinary capacity do understand, that these sayings do not contradict, but agree very well with that saying of *Paul, other foundation can no man lay*, &c. So long as Christ is held to be the Head, the all, and in all, to the Church of God.

But sith the Searchers do grant (and say to my knowledge, that they did ever grant) that laying on of Hands, *Heb.* 6. 2. to be a principle of the doctrine of Christ, and a part of the foundation; *which I take to be a good basis for a happy composure of our unhappy difference*; It remaineth, that the only (or chief) point of difference lyeth in this, *what laying on of Hands it is, that is called a part of the foundation, Heb.* 6. 2? Whether laying on of Hands with prayer, for the Spirit of promise; or some other kinde of laying on of Hands. We affirm the first, they imagine the latter. But now, ask them what laying on of Hands they will assign to be meant, *Heb.* 6. 2. and then, they either answer nothing at all, or else so flatly contradictorily one to another, or with such hesitation in themselves, as it is to be admired; but more to be lamented, that such Leaders in Israel (as they pass for; and to give them their due, might well pass for such,

IF,

IF, &c.) ſhould not be able to digeſt the milk which Babes muſt feed upon, nor can they aſſign to Babes their Portion therein. But inſtead of Milk, they ſometimes ſet before them ſtrong meat, even that impoſition of Hands which pertains to Biſhops in the Church; and this as one of the Babes principles, which is far from being fit nutriment for them. And now that the *Searchers* may ſufficiently ſhew themſelves to be in the dark, about that laying on of Hands which they confeſs to be a principle, *&c.* They number up ſix or ſeven ſorts of laying on of Hands, and then puts it to the queſtion, *Which of all theſe laying on of hands is intended* Heb. 6. 2. *and is that which we call a Doctrine of Chriſt?* By which unwary demand, no doubt they have led many a ſimple meaning Chriſtian into a Maze, and there left him; nor can they poſſibly give him relief, ſith they cannot extricate themſelves from the ſame meander; and as an addition to their folly, they demand, *that ſeeing divers men are differently perſwaded, concerning that laying on of hands*, Heb. 6. 2. *Whether this be not a ſufficient ground for them to doubt, whether that laying on of hands practiſed by us be inſtituted by God?* Which if it be, then they have ſufficient ground, to doubt of all things which they (as well as we) do hold for Gods inſtitutions;

For

For certainly divers men are (notwithstanding their interest) diversly perswaded of most places of Scripture, on which they ground their faith and practise. But to leave them in this mist, till they being weary, shall desire to return to the Lord in this part of his will; I shall endeavour to shew plainly, what laying on of hands it is, which is called a principle of Christs doctrine, and a part of the foundation. And though the *Searchers* are pleased to trouble their Readers, with a large enumeration of layings on of hands; yet they seem at last to be content, That, that laying on of Hands *Heb.* 6. 2. should be *one out of two*; namely, either that which was *for healing the sick*, or else that which was for *the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit*: But they rather incline to the first, and as for the latter, we have shewed there is no such thing, nor ever was; being a thing out of the reach of mans understanding to whom such gifts do belong, and consequently they know not on whom to impose their hands.

That the laying on of Hands, *Heb.* 6. 2. should be that on the sick, is no way congruous to truth or reason. For, how should this be one of the first principles of the Oracles of God, and Milk for Babes; seeing it is more blessed to believe without a miracle, than with

one, (but it is not more bleſſed to be without a principle of Chriſts Doctrine, than to have it) and thoſe who would not believe unleſs they ſaw them, are upbraided for the hardneſs of their hearts. Certain it is, That that laying on of hands to heal the ſick, if neceſſary, yet is prerequiſite to faith, ſigns being for them which do not believe; and not for them that do. But the laying on of hands, *Heb.* 6.2. is ſubſequent to Faith, yea it follows Baptiſm; and that as it is a principle of the Oracles of God, therefore it cannot be that which was for the working of miracles. Again, laying on of hands on the ſick, is moſt proper (if not only proper) for thoſe that are without, and therefore not milk for Babes in the Church, and conſequently not that laying on of Hands, *Heb.* 6. 2. As for ſick perſons in the Church of God, they are not bid to have hands laid on them, but are bid to ſend for the Elders of the Church, that they may pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord, *&c.* And they have a promiſe, that the prayer of faith ſhall ſave the ſick.

And what though the healing of the woman, *Luke* 3.17. and the diſeaſed people of the Iſland, *Acts* 28. 9, 10. may be teaching to all, yet this doth not prove, that it is a principle, appertaining to the beginning of a Chriſtian,

ſtian, and to follow his Baptiſm. Nor do I ſee, that it is properly teaching to a Believer as ſuch; for what doth it add to the Faith of a Chriſtian, *who believeth already, that Chriſt hath done far greater things than the healing of a diſeaſe?* For he believeth, that he hath overcome death, and brought life and immortality to light, by the Goſpel. Indeed, to thoſe that doubt whether Chriſt be the Son of God, ſuch a ſight may be ſome way convincing to them. But ſtill this is for the begetting of Faith, and ſo not the fourth principle of a Chriſtian. We ſee then, that laying on of Hands on perſons which are without, to work miracles, can with no ſhew of truth, be ſaid to be that laying on of hands *Heb. 6. 2.* Eſpecially if we conſider, how it is joyned with the caſting out of Devils, *Mark 16. 17.* Which is therefore a further evidence, that it is not in any wiſe to be recounted as milk for Babes, in the Church of Chriſt. I will end this point, with an argument from our Brethrens opinion; which is, *that laying on of Hands for working miracles is ceaſed*; whence I argue,

All the principles of Chriſts doctrine *do remain*, of which principles, *Laying on of Hands is one.*

But Laying on of Hands for working miracles (ſay our Brethren) *is ceaſed*; *Ergo*, laying on

of Hands for working miracles, is not that which is called a principle of the doctrine of Christ. *Ergo*, Laying on of Hands to heal the sick, is not that which is called a principle of the doctrine of Christ. That the laying on of Hands, *Acts* 8. *Acts* 19. is the very same that is mentioned, *Heb.* 6. 2. appeareth thus, That in *Heb.* 6 2. is a principle of the Doctrine of Christ, a part of the Foundation. But why so? Not simply as a bare Ceremony, or Act done by man; but rather in respect of some divine thing signified, and obtainable, in the religious observation of it, as the proper undoubted end of that service, and *that for Babes in Christ.* That laying on of Hands *Acts* 8. *Acts* 19. doth agree with these considerations, being dispensed to Babes in Christ, religiously performed with prayer to God; and signified a spiritual benediction, and was useful for the obtaining of it, even the spirit of promise; and was therefore fundamental to their Christian state. Again, that laying on of Hands *Heb.* 6 2. doth immediately follow Baptism, as its proper place; and so doth that laying on of Hands, *Acts* 8. and *Acts* 19. which cannot be said of any other laying on of Hands whatsoever.

The due consideration of the place of this laying on of Hands, is very material for our infor-

information, what particular laying on of Hands, is intended *Heb.* 6. 2. Yea, it is neceſſary in any caſe, that the order of the truths of Chriſt be maintained, otherwiſe we ſhall be very prepoſterous in Religion; Let us then reflect upon that order, in which the principles of Chriſtianity are propoſed to us, *Heb.* 6. 1,2. Here that faith which juſtifieth, muſt needs follow brokenneſs of heart, as not only Scripture, but Chriſtians experience doth witneſs. And the promiſe of the holy Spirit doth follow the Baptiſm of repentance, for remiſſion of ſins, *Acts* 2. 38. And ſo doth the means which God hath provided for the obtaining that gift or promiſe; and ſo doth the Reſurrection precede the eternal judgement. Nor can I imagine how our diſſenting Brethren can ſatisfie their conſciences, touching the place of that laying on of Hands, which they imagine to be a principle of Chriſts doctrine. For let thoſe that ſay, it is laying on of hands upon the ſick, tell me where they will place it in the order of their principles; and why it may not as well precede Faith, as follow Baptiſm? And how can thoſe that will have it to be laying on of hands on Officers, make it the fourth principle, or fundamental to Chriſtianity, ſith in reaſon the Church muſt be founded, before

ſhe ordain her Officers. As for thoſe which ſay, the laying on of hands *Heb.* 6. 2. is wicked mens laying wicked hands on the Saints, I ſay a more prodigious dream was ſcarce ever heard of: For how can that be the fourth principle of Chriſts, which neither he, nor none by his appointment, ever taught at all. And though it is true he ſpeaks of ſuch a thing, and fore-tels it, yet that proves it not his doctrine, for then it will follow, that *Judas* his treaſon, and all the impious acts fore-told in the Scripture, are the doctrines of Chriſt.

Nor ſhall we intermit *Doctor Hammond*'s conceit, as if the laying on of Hands, *Heb.* 6. 2. ſhould belong to thoſe who fall after Baptiſm; which conceit our brethren do ſeem very highly to approve of; as if any thing but truth in this caſe were acceptable to them, though it overthrow their own opinion. For whiles they lean to the Doctor, they have quite forgotten, that laying on of Hands, *Heb.* 6. 2. is a principle of Chriſts doctrine, and a part of the foundation; yea milk for Babes in Chriſt. But what ſhall we ſay, do none attain to all the principles, nor to every part of the foundation, but ſuch as fall after Baptiſm? Again, are they only Babes which fall ſo, as to need the indulgence of reconciliation; or do not ſometimes

times ſtrong men fall, when Babes hold on their way? It is not forgotten, that the chief Author of this Search, did ſo fall, as to need the indulgence of reconciliation; from whence I conclude, that he either is a Babe, or elſe ſtrong men may fall; If the latter, then I further conclude, that if there be any ſuch laying on of hands as the Doctor ſuppoſes; but proves not (though our brethren unwarily ſay that he doth) yet it cannot be that which is mentioned, *Heb.* 6. 2. for the reaſons aforeſaid. As alſo, for that it would follow from this conceit, that one and the ſame perſon, muſt have hands impoſed on him 70 times and ſeven, if he fall ſo often after his Baptiſm, and require the indulgence of reconciliation.

I doubt not, but that our diſſenting Brethren would eaſily grant, that the laying on of Hands, *Heb.* 6. 2. is the very ſame that is mentioned, *Acts* 8. *Acts* 19. provided we did not urge the continuance of the practice in the Church of God. But then I would know, how we can rightly own that principle, if we deſtroy the practick part? And here let me ſeriouſly ask our Brethren, what manner of inſtruction they give young Diſciples, concerning this matter? or how they principle them in it, or build them upon it? Their

conſcience is witneſs, (I ſpeak what I know, for I alſo was as they are) that they either wholly paſs by that principle in ſilence, not inſtructing them at all concerning it; or elſe, if any thing be ſaid about it; it is rather to make the matter doubtful, than to clear their underſtandings in it. And indeed it's impoſſible they ſhould do otherwiſe (as the caſe ſtands) for ſeeing they know not what it is, are therefore ſuch (I ſpeak it confidently, yet I truſt humbly) as (notwithſtanding their largeneſs in the knowledge of many things) have need to be taught this principle of the Oracles of God. Let it not offend them, though I plainly tell them, that in this point of Faith, they are too much like the *Athenians* in another caſe, for as they by their inſcription *to the unknown God*, declared plainly, that they ignorantly worſhipped him whom they knew not; Even ſo our Brethren, whiles they grant (and all men muſt grant) laying on of Hands, *Heb. 6. 2.* to be a principle of Chriſts doctrine, and yet cannot determine what laying on of Hands that is; they do little leſs than ſubſcribe, to the *UNKNOWN PRINCIPLE*; or the *UNKOWN PART OF THE FOUNDATION.* If otherwiſe, let them determine poſitively concerning this principle, what it is; and let

their

their diligence appear, in teaching it; together with the reſt of the principles: which yet (to uſe their own dialect) I deſpair ever to ſee them perform either the one, or the other; at leaſt, ſo long as they carry themſelves towards thoſe who ſhew them that which they ſo ignorantly pretend to own, ſo much like the *Athenians*, as to account of thoſe to *be ſetters forth of ſtrange Principles*, as they accounted *Paul*, *a ſetter forth of ſtrange gods*. And though you (as they) ſeem to be very deſirous to hear what in this caſe we have to ſay; yet when we have told you the truth, then, as they thought it a thing incredible, that God ſhould raiſe the dead; ſo you think it incredible, that we ſhould receive any bleſſing, in the way of prayer with the laying on of Hands; as evidently appears by your demand, in theſe words.

How doth your practiſe of laying on of hands, agree with theirs, (meaning the Apoſtles) *Acts* 8. *Acts* 19. *having no ſuch bleſſing to communicate, as they had?*

In which demand, you ſeem to lye under two very great miſtakes; as firſt, that the Apoſtles had the bleſſing of the gifts of the Spirit, to communicate to others; as if, they could give the gift of propheſie, tongues, miracle, &c! Secondly, that on whomſoever they

they laid their hands, the ſame received ſuch a bleſſing; to wit, the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. Which blinde conceits you never learned of *Simon Peter*, for they are the errours of *Simon Magus*, Acts 8. Whoſe blindneſs was rebuked by *Peter*, affirming, that that bleſſing was the *gift of God*. Yea, it is written, *and the Scripture cannot be broken*, that *every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights*, &c. Yea the Spirit it ſelf is free, *blowing where it liſteth, and is therefore not to be communicated by any man whatſoever*. We conclude therefore, that the Apoſtles had no bleſſing to communicate to thoſe, on whom they laid their hands; but could only beg it at the hands of God, as the very words of the Text doth ſhew, *Acts* 8. They prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghoſt, not that they might receive the gift of tongues, miracles, *&c.* but only that they might receive the Holy Ghoſt. From the Text thus conſidered, I argue; *He did communicate the bleſſing only, to whom the prayer was made for it. But the prayer was only made to God, therefore he only did communicate the bleſſing.* Again, *They that beg a bleſſing for themſelves, or for others, do not communicate that bleſſing to themſelves, or to others*; But, *the A-*

poſtles

postles did only beg the blessing of the Spirit, &c. therefore they did not communicate it, &c.

Let it further be considered, that if that which they ask be *obtainable*, and *obtained* by those that now wait upon God in prayer, with the laying on of Hands, then our practise doth agree very well with theirs; now what did they ask? The gift of tongues? *&c.* No, they only asked the *Holy Ghost*, and surely the *Holy Ghost* is now *attainable* and *attained*, *even there, where tongues are not attained*; Otherwise it will follow, that the greater part of the Saints in the primitive times, as well as the Saints in these dayes, have not received the Holy Ghost; which is not only foolish, but very pernicious to imagine. For *Acts* 13.32. its said, the Disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost; and the Church is exhorted to be filled with the Spirit. All which may be attained to now, although the miraculous gifts of the Spirit be not attained, nor indeed are they necessary in order thereunto; as the places last quoted do shew.

Now that there is an agreement between the laying on of hands, *Acts* 8. *Acts* 19. *Heb.* 6.2. and that which we practise, will further appear by this parallel: *The Apostles performed laying on of Hands, with prayer to the Lord,*

Lord, and ſo do we; *They performed this ſervice on Diſciples, as ſuch, whether male or female*, and ſo do we; *It was practiſed by them in order to the receiving the Holy Ghoſt*, and ſo it is by us; *They placed laying on of Hands, in the fourth place of Chriſtian principles*, and ſo do we; *They asked not Tongues, and Miraculous gifts*, no more do we: *The effects of that ſervice depended not on them*, no more it doth on us; But *that was according to the will of the Father then*, and ſo it is to us.

Juſtly might we return our Brethrens demand upon themſelves, in their practiſes of prayer and preaching, when we conſider how God gave the Spirit in the likeneſs of fiery tongues, to the hundred and twenty Diſciples, who prayed with one accord, in one place: The like to which effect, never followed the moſt ſerious prayer, that ever proceeded from our Brethren. Muſt we then conclude, that there is no agreement between their prayer, and the prayer of the Church in thoſe dayes? This is the way to make void the the wayes of God, unleſs he give us the like effect at all times, which he ever gave to any, at any time. The like may be ſaid of preaching; For when *Peter* preached, *Acts* 10. the Holy Ghoſt fell on all that heard the word, ſo as that they ſpake with tongues. Would it not

not be absurd now to say, that *Peter* did communicate the blessing of tongues here? And thence to conclude, that none may preach unless they have the blessing of tongues to communicate to those to whom they preach.

Nor may we say, that the like effect did alwayes follow the preaching of *Peter* himself; no nor his laying on of Hands neither. For there is no mention that those Disciples at *Samaria* received the gift of tongues; but only that they reeeived the Holy Ghost: For we have shewed, that the Holy Ghost may be received so, as that persons may be known, and said by others to be full of the Holy Ghost, and yet the miraculous gifts of the Spirit may be absent. Nor is it to be doubted, but that *Simon Magus* had hands imposed on him, in common with the rest, sith he was a Believer, and Baptized, and shewed as much zeal as the rest (if not more) for its said he continued with *Philip*, and wondered, beholding the miracles which were done, *&c.* Nor was the deceit of his heart perceived, till after the service of laying on of Hands was performed, *Acts* 8. And yet certainly his receivings in respect of Spiritual blessings, was not so great, but that it may be safely presumed, that many Christians in these dayes, do receive the Holy Ghost as much as *Simon Magus* did. And though

though *Peter* ſaid to him, thou haſt no part or lot in this matter, yet the words [this matter] cannot refer to *Simons* deſire of ſubjection to laying on of Hands; but to his ambitious and avaritious deſire, to be a Miniſter to diſpence that ordinance to others, for carnal advantage.

And whereas it is much doubted, whether laying on of Hands, was ever taught or commanded by authority from heaven, me thinks this ſhould not be hard to be underſtood. Unleſs we can be ſo void of reaſon, as to dream that *Peter* and *John*, when they came among the Diſciples, went prepoſterouſly, from perſon to perſon, praying and putting their hands upon them, and that without telling them what they meant by it. Which to do were enough to amaze the Spectators, and is contrary to the glory and gravity of Goſpel performances; which as they muſt be acts (or ſubjections) of Faith, if they do pleaſe God ſo the faith of ſuch acts (or ſubjections) muſt come by hearing, with underſtanding what they muſt do, or to what they muſt ſubmit, and to what end. And this hearing muſt be from the Word of God, elſe there is no ground for Faith, or practice in matters of Religion, ſo as to pleaſe God. But God was well pleaſed with the Apoſtles acting, and

th

the Samaritans ſubmiſſion, in the caſe of prayer with laying on of Hands, and bore witneſs from heaven that he approved it; Therefore their obedience was of Faith; Therefore they heard with underſtanding, that what they did was their duty; & therefore the Lord taught them both concerning the duty, and the end thereof.

That the Apoſtles ſhould practiſe with ſuch frequency, this ſervice of prayer with the laying on of Hands, upon Diſciples generally; That it ſhould be recorded among the chief of their Acts, in promoting the Goſpel, and ſetling of Churches, that it ſhould be placed among the principles of Religion, and all this without authority from heaven, is unworthy the followers of Chriſt or his Apoſtles to imagine.

But foraſmuch as divers have laboured to ſatisfie the contrary minded in this point, whoſe works are extant & unanſwered, I ſhall not inſiſt farther; ſave that I do briefly ſhew that our Brethren, are not conſiſtent with themſelves in this particular. For they do that themſelves, which they will not allow themſelves to do; for they practice laying on of Hands on Officers, for which there is as little by way of precept as for the laying Hands on Diſciples, or rather leſs. For ſince they

they do now acquit that Text, 1 *Tim.* 5. 22. as not having any thing to do with the busineſs of Ordination; and to ſtrengthen a contrary interpretation, do bring the Suffrages of Dr. *Hammond*, *Victor*, *Cyprian*, and the Council of Carthage; ſure I am they have no Text which hath ſo much as the face of a precept [I mean in ſo many words] for laying hands upon Officers; although it is beyond doubt with me, that that way was ordained of God, to depute his ſervants in the Miniſtery, to their works reſpectively; wherefore I will conclude this diſcourſe, with this Enthememe.

There is ſufficient ground in Scripture for laying on of Hands on Officers in the Church. *Ergo*, there is ſufficient ground in Scripture for laying hands on Members of the Church. And whereas our Brethren do make a ſhew (by their actions out of ſome ancient Authors, as well as Modern) as if Antiquity were on their part in this Controverſie; I will therefore put in ſomething by way of evidence to the contrary, as I finde them; partly from the Authors themſelves, and partly from ſuch as have gathered certain ſentences out of the works of the Ancients concerning this matter.

Tertullian to this effect; *That like as in Baptism the flesh is washed, that the soul may be made clean; so in laying on of Hands the flesh is overshadowed, that the soul may be illuminated by the Holy Spirit.* Tertul. de resur. c. 8.

In the Constitutions of *Clement*, there is said to be this passage, *viz. We must all hasten to be born again to God* (meaning by Baptism) *and at length to be signed by the Bishop, that is, to receive the seven fold grace of the Spirit, otherwise a person cannot perfectly be a Christian, if carelesly and willingly (and not of necessity) he remain without it.*

Cyprian, speaking of the Samaritans receiving the Holy Ghost, by laying on of Hands; saith —— *Which also is done with us, that they which are baptized in the Church, must be presented to those who are set over the Church, that by prayer and laying on of Hands, may obtain the Holy Ghost.* Cip. ep. ad Jubi.

Ferom. ad Lucif. *Ferom* (according to *Andreas Willet*) touching laying on of Hands, hath theſe words; *viz. It hath ever been the Cuſtom of the Church.*

Euſeb. l. 6. c. 42. *Euſebius*, hath a paſſage concerning *Novatus* (who lived about the middle of the third Century) how he ſlighted the impoſition of Hands; theſe are his words (after mention made of his being baptized, he ſaith) *He obtained not —— that which he ſhould have done, according to the Canon (or rule) of the Church; to wit, Confirmation by the hands of the Biſhop. Inſomuch then he obtained not that, how came he by the Holy Ghoſt?* See alſo to the ſame effect, the ſeventh book of *Euſebius*, *c.* 2.

For Modern Writers, *Eraſmus* (in my opinion) as he is moſt clear without mixture in moſt of his Expoſitions, and particularly in this point he is moſt clear.

Theſe are his words upon the principles, *Heb. 6.* 1, 2.

The

The first degree unto Christianity, is to be repentant of our former life, and to forsake sin; Next of all it is required, that we be taught that true innocency, and soul-health, is to be hoped for of God: Then forthwith, that we be purged by Holy Baptism, from the filthiness of our sins, and restored again to the state of innocency: then that we receive the Holy Ghost, by laying on of Hands; and believe the resurrection of the dead to come; and also that last judgement, that shall award some to eternal felicity, and other some, to everlasting pains and damnation. *Erasm. paraph. in Heb. 6. 2.*

Diodate hath these words; Laying on of Hands, *was a Ceremony joyned to Baptism, for a sign of Blessing and Consecration to God.* And he calls these principles, *the first grounds of Christian Catechism*, and *the heads of Christian Doctrine.* *Diodate Annot. on Heb. 6. 2.*

As in Baptism, the outward Ministery or mystical washing doth regenerate, wash away sins, cleanse and purge us from our filthiness; so doth the im- *Tindale in 2 Tim. 1. 6.*

ſition or Laying on of Hands, give us the gift of the Holy Ghoſt: but the outward and myſtical waſhing, doth onely repreſent unto us, that in Chriſt's Blood our ſins are clean waſhed away, &c.

From theſe Teſtimonies it appeareth, that what the Churches of Chriſt now contend for, touching the practice, and the ſubjects, and the end of prayer, with Laying on of Hands, is no *novel* thing; but as the inſtitution of that Ordinance is found in Holy Writ (as we have ſhewed) ſo it hath continued in uſe as neceſſary, in place, the next to holy Baptiſm, among Chriſtians generally.

AN

AN APPENDIX.

MEeting lately with a very worthy Brother, at *East Haddon* in the County of *Northampton*; he did much importune me, to admit of a ſhort diſpute with him about the principle under conſideration; to whom I conſent, and he laid down this Aſſertion,

That Laying on of Hands, Heb. 6. 2. *is not a foundation Principle, nor a practical Duty.*

Againſt which I laid down this Poſition:

VIZ.

Laying on of Hands Heb. 6. 2. *is a Principle of the Doctrine of Chriſt, to be practiſed by his people, and a part of the Foundation there mentioned:* Which my Oppoſite did wholly deny.

It was argued that I ſhould be Opponent, whereupon I offered this Argument.

Opponent. Arg. 1.

The word *Principles*, Heb. 6. 1. being of the plural number, is refer'd to all theſe particulars; namely, Repentance, Faith, Baptiſms, Laying on of Hands, the Reſurrection of the dead, and the Eternal judgement.

Ergo, Laying on of Hands, *Heb.* 6. 2. is a principle of the doctrine of Chriſt.

Re-

Reſpondent.

You ought not to prove it a Principle by that Text.

Opponent.

My poſition is not the Text, therefore I may prove it by this Text.

Reſpondent.

The Text about which we differ will not prove it.

Opponent.

If any Scripture will prove it, it is ſufficient; and therefore anſwer to the Argument. Either diſtinguiſh, or deny the Antecedent or conſequence.

Reſpondent.

I will prove that Laying on of Hands, Heb. 6. *is no foundation principle, thus.* —

Opponent.

Sir, you would by no means be Opponent, when I deſired you to make good your Aſſertion; but complain'd, as if I put you upon that which was not your part: Why then do you

now refuſe to anſwer, and put your ſelf into the place of the Opponent, which you know is contrary to rule, ſith I am now to prove.

Reſpondent.

Well, I anſwer by denying the conſequence.

Opponent.

I deſire to know whether you grant the Antecedent, for your denial of the Conſequence only, ſuppoſeth that you grant the Antecedent.

Reſpondent.

I do grant your Antecedent.

Opponent.

Then take notice that you grant the firſt branch of my Poſition, which you denied [*ſaying, I deny it all*] for that the word *principles*, *Heb.* 6. 1. refer to all the particulars aforeſaid, then to Laying on of Hands; and ſo the Conſequence will follow. Thus you grant as much as I can deſire.

Reſpondent.

I will prove ——

Oppo-

Opponent.

Brother, you ought not to prove till you be Opponent, this you know better than I do. Therefore either recal your anſwer to the Antecedent, or confeſs your errour in denying the firſt branch of my poſition.

Reſpondent.

Well, for Argument ſake, I grant an errour in matter of form.

Opponent.

No Brother, your errour is an errour of judgement. Firſt, to deny Laying on of Hands, *Heb. 6. 2.* to be a principle of the Doctrine of Chriſt, and then to grant it; in one of theſe you muſt needs err in judgement.

Here my Reſpondent was not willing to acknowledge an errour in judgement. And therefore (as alſo for divers other preſſing occaſions that was to be conſidered, and the time but ſhort) I put a period to the diſpute.

And becauſe I had many other things to ſay, which time would not then permit to be ſpoken, I will now offer them to conſideration; and that as for other cauſes, ſo chiefly for that I hope it may tend to the ſatisfaction of my honoured Brother, and others that are under the ſame miſtake.

Argu-

Argument 2.

Laying on of Hands, Heb. 6. 2. *is a Principle of the Oracles of God.*

Ergo, *Laying on of Hands*, Heb. 6. 2. *is a Principle of the doctrine of Christ.*

The Antecedent is manifeſt, becauſe the ſame particulars which is called the principles of Chriſts doctrine, *Heb.* 6. is called the principles of the Oracles of God, *Heb.* 5. 12. which is evident; Becauſe as the principles of Gods Oracles, *Heb.* 5. 12. were the things which the Hebrew Church ought not to have any need to be taught *again*; ſo the principles of the doctrine of Chriſt, *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. are the things which (as a foundation) among them, ought not to need any laying again.

Argument 3.

All thoſe particulars, which in Heb. 6. 1, 2. *the Apoſtle ſaith he would intermit, and ſo go on to perfection, are the Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt:*

But Laying on of Hands, Heb. 6. 2. *is one of the particulars, which the Apoſtle ſaid*, Heb. 6. 1. *that he would intermit.*

Ergo,

Ergo, *Laying on of Hands*, Heb. 6. 2. *is a Principle of the Doctrine of Christ.*

I take this Argument to be irrefragable, therefore I proceed to the second branch of the position, which is; That laying on of Hands, *Heb.* 6. 2. ought to be practised by the people of God.

But first I must explicate the words [*Laying on of Hands*] which in the understanding of any considering man, must needs signifie an *Act*, and therefore cannot be restrained to the passive; for as the subject on whom Hands is laid, is passive as to the Act, (but not in faith) so the party imposing of Hands is active. And evident it is, that the word [Principle] *Heb.* 6. 1. refers to the *Act expressly*, and to the *passive* implicitly, as any considering man may understand: Whence I argue,

Argument 1.

Seeing the Laying on of Hands, Heb. 6. 2. *as it is a Principle (or Doctrine of Christ (if you please) is not passive only, but active also. It must needs be practised, either by the servants of Christ, or the servants of Sathan;*

But

But Laying on of Hands, Heb. 6. 2. *as it is a principle of the doctrine of Christ, is not to be practised by the servants of Sathan:*

Ergo, *Laying on of Hands, as it is a principle of the doctrine of Christ, is to be practised by the servants of Christ.*

The Major is plain. The Minor surely will not be denied. For who will presume to say, that the principles of Christs doctrine (as such) are to be practised by the servants of Sathan. Seeing it is Christians (*not the devils Vassals*) who as they are once to lay it, so are *not to lay again the Foundation.* As for wicked men, they will persecute the Saints again and again, and so Christians must have the hands of wicked men laid on them again and again; and that when they are gone on to perfection, as well as when they begin their profession, so then this Laying on of Hands, *Heb. 6.* being but once to be laid, cannot be that which the wicked do impose; sith its certain as they do it often, so sure it is, they ought not to do it so much as once. Again, *The laying on of Hands by the wicked, to persecute the Saints, is the doctrine of the Devil.* Ergo, *no principle of the Doctrine of Christ.* Ergo, *Not that laying on of Hands mentioned,* Heb. 6. 2.

Argu-

Argument 2.

Laying on of Hands, Heb. 6. 2. *was held and practiſed by the primitive Church, as a principle of Chriſts Doctrine;*

Ergo, *It ought to be held and practiſed as a principle of Chriſts Doctrine now, by the ſubſequent Churches.*

The Antecedent is proved above, therefore the conſequence is indubitable; which yet I may demonſtrate thus.

Argument 3.

None of the principles of Chriſts Doctrine (which were practical) are aboliſhed, no more then thoſe which are not practical.

Ergo, *Laying on of Hands as a practical principle*, Heb. 6. 2. *ought now to be practiſed by the ſervants of Chriſt.*

The Antecedent cannot be denied, without manifeſt danger to all the principles of Chriſts Doctrine; for if one be aboliſhed, then why not the reſt? So then the conſequence muſt not be denied.

The third branch of my poſition proved, Viz. *That the Laying on of Hands*, Heb. 6. 2. *is a part of the foundation there mentioned.*

But

But first, for explication of the word [*Foundation*] it is to be considered; That when it is applied to Christianity, or the Church of God; It may be considered first originally, and in the main, and so Christ our Lord is only the foundation. Or secondly, demonstratively, or in the mean; and so his doctrine may be said to be the foundation, by an usual manner of speech, when the thing containing or holding forth is taken for the thing contained or held forth. For, whatsoever Christ is in himself, certain it is, he is not a foundation *TO US*. But as he is held forth in his doctrine, *Heb.* 6. 1, 2, &c. Hence I argue,

Argument 1.

The word Foundation, Heb. 6. 1. *cannot be refer'd to Christ, as the foundation of his Church, originally, or in the main, or in the highest or most sublime consideration.*

Ergo, *The word* [*Foundation*] *is refer'd to the doctrine of Christ, in the first, or most easie demonstration; to wit, the first rudiments, or principles of Religion; even such as Babes in Christ may know them.*

The Antecedent is true, otherwise what shall we think of *Paul*. Would he not teach the Chri-

Christians concerning the knowledge of Christ in the more sublime points of Christianity? Surely he professes to do this, at the time he wrote to them; and indeed, how else could he lead them on to perfection? *Heb.* 5. 11. and 6. 3. So that our consequence is very rational.

Argument 2.

The word Foundation, Heb. 6. 1. *is comprehensive of all these particulars, to wit, Faith, Repentance*, &c.

Ergo, *the word Foundation*, Heb. 6. 1. *is comprehensive of Laying on of Hands*, Heb. 6. 2. *as well as any of the rest.*

That the Antecedent is true, may in part be perceived by the Searchers themselves; For they were more rational than *to deny*, the word Foundation to be meant, of this or that particular only; and *grant* it to be meant of the rest. Therefore they would have *none of the said particulars* to be understood by, or comprehended in the word *Foundation*, but restrain it only to Christ; which yet is contrary to their own opinion, sith they have since granted, *Laying on of Hands*, Heb 6. 2. *to be a part of the Foundation.*

The

The conſequence is good, becauſe no reaſon can be aſſigned, why the doctrine of Baptiſm ſhould be a part of the foundation there meant, rather than the promiſe of the Holy Spirit, with the way of God to ſeek for it.

Argument 3.

The Apoſtle in *Heb.* 6.12. deſcribes the foundation in its ſeveral parts.

But it is irrational in ſuch a deſcription, to intermix two particulars in the midſt of four, the two firſt, and two laſt, being Fundamental, and the two middlemoſt (Circumſtantial (or what elſe would you have them.) And yet give us no intimation of any ſuch unſuitable commixtion.

Ergo, *Laying on of Hands is one part of the Foundation, which is mentioned,* Heb. 6. 1, 2.

T. G.

THE

The Second part.

Of the Conſtitution of a true CHURCH.

NEither are the demands of our Brethren, about what truths, the knowledge whereof are neceſſary to the Conſtitution of a true Church, ſo difficult; but that we ſhall give them a direct anſwer, at leaſt to a larger degree, than what they in that caſe have aſſigned; for they only ſet down Faith, Repentance and Baptiſm, with a holy life, *&c.* omitting not only the fourth principle of Chriſts Doctrine, (though they confeſs laying on of Hands, *Heb.* 6. 2. to be a part of the foundation) but alſo they omit the Belief of the Reſurrection, and the eternal Judgment. If it ſhould be ſaid that they comprehend the two laſt principles in that of Faith towards God, we muſt tell them they

had better by far have expreſſed them; for certainly in this caſe we cannot be too expreſs, if we expreſs nothing but the truth. But to be plain, it's juſtly ſuſpected that they do not make the Knowledge or Belief of the Reſurrection and eternal judgment neceſſary to the Eſſence of a true Church; for if they had, they would ſome where or other have aſſerted theſe truths to be neceſſary in that behalf; which they have not done, but rather argued to the contrary, while they reaſon from the ſtate of the Church before Chriſts Aſcenſion to the ſtate of the Church after it, as we ſhall ſee more anon.

Theſe things premiſed, I anſwer directly to their demands, (in this caſe) That the belief and practice (ſo far as they are practical) of all theſe principles or truths, *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. Are neceſſary to the right or perfect Conſtitution of a true Church, which I thus demonſtrate.

All the firſt principles of Gods Oracles (from the time they were in being) *are neceſſary to be known, believed, &c. in the Conſtitution of a true Church:* Ergo, *all thoſe truths, Heb.* 6. 1, 2. *Are neceſſary to be known, believed, &c. in the conſtitution of a true Church.*

The *Antecedent* I prove, becauſe, *firſt principles are either neceſſary in the conſtitution of a true Church, or not at all. But firſt principles are*

nece-

neceſſary; Ergo, *they are neceſſary in the conſtitution of a true Church.* This will yet further appear, by conſidering every principle apart after this manner.

1. If Repentance from dead works be not neceſſary to the conſtitution or beginning of a true Church, no man can ſhew a reaſon why it ſhould be neceſſary at all.

2. If Faith towards God be not neceſſary to the conſtitutiou of a true Church, then not at all.

3. If Baptiſms be not neceſſary to be taught, *&c.* in the conſtitution of a true Church, then not at all.

4. If Laying on of Hands for the promiſed and Sealing Spirit be not neceſſary in the conſtitution of a true Church, then not neceſſary at all.

5,6. If the Knowledge that the dead ſhall riſe again and be judged, be not neceſſary in the conſtitution of a true Church, then not neceſſary at all. And therefore I argue further.

Milk is neceſſary for Babes, or mankind in his firſt eſtate; Ergo, *all theſe principles*, Heb. 6.1,2. *Are neceſſary to Churches in their beginning, or conſtitution. The antecedent* is evident by ſenſe, the conſequence is true, becauſe all the principles, *Heb.* 6.1, 2. Are called Milk, *Heb.* 5.12. And that which pertains to Babes in Chriſt,

and consequently to the constitution of Churches.

Again, If the Principles of Religion be not to be taught in the beginning of our Christian State, no man can tell the time when these things ought to be taught. For pass but the time of the beginning, Plantation, or founding of Churches, and let our Brethren resolve us concerning the proper time to begin to teach the Principles of Religion, and particularly, that principle of Laying on of Hands? Mean while we conclude, that the proper time to instruct Men concerning the promise of the Spirit, and consequently touching the means to obtain it, is at or about the time of their beginning their Christian course, or being made the Members of Christs Body, because every Member of that body ought to be vivified by that one Spirit, which God hath promised to them that obey him.

Again, *The whole foundation is necessary to the constitution of a true Church*; Ergo, *all the principles*, Heb 6. *are necessary to the constitution of a true Church.*

The *Antecedent* will never be denyed by any wise builder, for they know the Superstructure is not like to be secure, if the Foundation be defective. The consequence is good, because every principle, *Heb.* 6. is a part of the Foundation,

dation, and ſo Laying on of Hands among the reſt, as is granted on all ſides.

Nor will our Brethrens *demands* grounded on *the ſtate of the Church before the Aſcention of our Lord*, prejudice ought that we have ſaid, ſeeing it is evident, that they were not only ignorant of the *promiſe of the Spirit*, and *by what means it ſhould be obtained*, but they were plainly ignorant that Chriſt muſt die for the ſins of men, and riſe again for their juſtification, as appears *Luke* 24. 19,20,21,22,23, 24, 25,26,27. *And he* [that is Jeſus] *ſaid unto them* [that is his Diſciples] *what things? And they ſaid unto him concerning Jeſus of* Nazareth, *which was a Prophet mighty indeed, and word before God, and all the people. And the chief Prieſts and how our Rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him; But we* TRUSTED *that it had been he that ſhould have delivered* Iſrael. *And beſide all this, to day is the third day ſince theſe things were done*; yea, *and certain women alſo of our own company*, made us aſtoniſhed, *which were early at the Sepulchre, and when they found not his Body, they came, ſaying that they had alſo ſeen a Viſion of Angels, which ſaid* That he was alive. *And certain that was with us went to the Sepulcher, and found it even as the women had ſaid, but him they ſaw not: Then he ſaid* [that is Jeſus] *unto them,* [that is his Diſciples] *O fools, and ſlow of*

heart, to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken, ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things.

Hence theſe three things are evident. 1. That Chriſts Diſciples were ignorant that he ſhould work mans deliverance by dying for them. 2. That he ſhould overcome death by riſing again from the dead. 3. That Chriſt both reproves their ignorance, and inſtructs them in the knowledge of the Scriptures touching theſe principles.

Now let us ſee what our Brethren have gained by quering from the ſtate of the Church before, to the ſtate of the Church after the Aſcenſion of our Lord; ſurely not an hairsbreadth of proof, that Laying on of Hands ſhould be diſpenſed with in the perfect conſtitution of a true Church, any more than that the knowledge of Chriſts dying for our ſins, and riſing again for our juſtification, may be diſpenſed with in like manner.

But howſoever it was the pleaſure of God to wink at the days of this ignorance, yet ſurely we know that men are not now under the promiſe of ſalvation, unleſs they confeſs with the mouth the Lord Jeſus [that is, not to cry Lord Lord only, but acknowledge him their Lord purchaſer, and their Lord commander] and ſhall believe in their heart that God hath raiſed him from the dead: whence we conclude,

clude, if they be not under the promise of salvation, they are very unfit for Church-Communion.

And here we will take notice of your demand, *Where the Apostles Laid Hands upon any after they had received the Holy Ghost?*

The ground of this demand seems to be corrupt in two respects; first, in that it supposeth, that if the end of an Ordinance be obtained, the Ordinance ceaseth. The contrary to which is evident in the case of Baptism, *Acts* 10.47.48. For Baptism in the ordinary way of Gods communicating the graces of the Gospel is antecedent to the reception thereof, & is propounded as a means wherein not only the Remission of our sins shall be granted to us, but as a condition whereupon we shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, *Act.* 2.38. yet we know the Spirit was (once at least) given, and received before Baptism was dispensed, yea those persons had the chief end of Baptism; for God that knew their hearts did now evidence the Remission of their sins, purifyng their hearts by Faith, *Acts* 11. yet did not all this in the least make void that solemn Ordinance, the Baptism of Repentance for Remission of sins, which was fore-ordained to signifie and Sacramentally to confer the grace of the pardon of sin, and the inward washing of

the Conſcience by Faith in the bloud of Jeſus Chriſt. If then the end of an Ordinance being obtained, doth not make void the practick part (during the time that the Church is under Ordinances) then who can forbid prayer with the Impoſition of Hands, for the gift of the promiſed Spirit, even for thoſe that have received a meaſure thereof already, ſeeing none will ſay (I truſt) that they have received ſo much, but that they are capable of receiving more.

Again, it is the will of God that there ſhould be no Schiſm in the body, nor confuſion in the Doctrine or practice of his holy things, 1 *Cor.*1.10. *Rom.*16 17. 1 *Cor.*14 33. And therefore hath not ordained a divided or confuſed order in the conſtitution of his Churches, which yet cannot be avoided, if once it be allowed that part of a Congregation (under a pretence that they have the Spirit or gift of the Holy Ghoſt already) muſt be admitted to all manner of priviledges in the Church, without any regard had to an Ordinance, or principle of the Goſpel, without the obſervation whereof, the other part cannot arrive at the priviledge of Communion in the ſame body, without being guilty of the breach of order. A weak ſight may perceive whither ſuch a conceit would lead us at laſt, even into that Wilderneſs

derneſs whither many are gone, who (forſooth) becauſe they have the kernel, to wit, the Spirit, they have no need of the ſhell, to wit, the Ordinance of God [as if that Spirit which leads men into diſobedience were the Holy Ghoſt] till at length they have *ſo much Spirit*, that the knowledge of Chriſt crucified without the gates of *Jeruſalem*, is of as little eſteem with them as his Ordinances.

The other corrupt ground of this demand ſeems to be an *over-weaning conceit of preſent revivings*, and hath too much of that Language, *What is it fit ſhall we have if we pray unto him?* And ſeems to border much upon their apprehenſions, who concerning Holy Baptiſm do thus ſpeak, *I am as well as Water can make me.* Not conſidering that *the way of God is ſtrength to the upright*; and that *God never ſaid to his people ſeek ye me in vain.* The ground therefore of this demand being thus corrupt, we ſhall leave it without further Anſwer.

We ſhall ſeriouſly conſider the moſt important pinch of a great part of our Brethrens demands; and that is, *whether they ought not to be deemed a true Church, they being under the profeſſion of Faith, Repentance, and Baptiſm, reſolving to believe and do further what they ſhall from time to time underſtand to be according to the will of God?*

Theſe

These latter words (I confess) do make a fair shew, yet are as little satisfactory to us with respect to the truth under consideration, as the like resolution would be to them, from such persons of other perswasions as should desire Communion with them, only desiring to be born with, in the case of Holy Baptism, till they see it to be their duty; though in the mean time, they frequently dispute and write against it, and do more than any other Adversaries whatsoever, to weaken the Hands of many Christians, who religiously observe it, as necessary to the perfect constitution of the Church of Christ. I say, like as this kind of resolution, would little comfort our Brethren, so doth the other as little comfort us, till we see them in good earnest more solicitous for the knowledge of the truth which they see not, than hitherto (or at least than by this their search) they have appeared to be. But notwithstanding this, and much more of like nature which might be said, I shall answer this demand with all integrity and ingenuity: And first Negatively.

That those *baptized Christians who reject prayer with the Laying on of Hands, for the Spirit of promise*, hath a Church-state perfect in principles and orderly in constitution, according to *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. [*which I take to be a plat-form for*

the conſtitution of Churches, if there be one in all the New Teſtament] I ſay, that our Brethren hath *ſuch a conſtitution*, or *Church-ſtate* I muſt plainly deny, and for the grounds of this denyal I dare refer my ſelf (if not to the Conſciences of our differing Brethren yet) to the Reaſons and Scripture-evidences preceding: But Secondly, That our Brethren have a Church-ſtate in ſome good meaſure according to truth; I muſt and do chearfully grant, like as I muſt grant him to be a man in reſpect of the genus, who wants an hand, or foot; as alſo in reſpect of that meaſure of Form and proportion which he holds with other men, and yet deny the ſame perſon to be a man in reſpect of the ſpecies or parts, which are neceſſary to the perfect Eſſence, compoſition and Form of a man. Or as I may call an Edifice by the name of an houſe, though it want not only much of its compleatneſs in reſpect of the Superſtructure (as God knows all Churches do) but alſo though it be ſomway defective, by reaſon of the *abſence* of ſome material part of the *Foundation*, which *defect* no Churches (but by reaſon of their wilful want) need to have; for though it is certainly true, *that we cannot do the things which we would*, in going on to *perfection* (at leaſt according to the higheſt import of that expreſſion) by reaſon of the manifold obſtructions within and without,

yet

yet doubtleſs we may learn all the *Rudiments* or firſt principles of Chriſtianity, maugre the oppoſition of Sathan and all his Auxiliaries; otherwiſe it will follow that we cannot exceed the ſtature of Babes in Chriſt.

And that we may improve our Simile (by which we have explained our ſelves in Anſwer to the moſt important of our Brethrens demands) for the defence of the truth under debate. Let it be conſidered, that look how far forth ſuch a neceſſary Member as the Hand, *&c.* doth conduce, not only to the well-being, but even to the very being of the body Natural, ſo far doubtleſs the leaſt Foundation principle of Chriſtianity, conduceth not only to the well-being, but to the very being of the Church of Chriſt; and conſequently as he that taketh a Member from the body Natural (be it Hand or other Member) detracteth ſomewhat from the being of ſuch a body, even ſo, he that taketh away from the principles or Foundation of Chriſtianity, doth intrench upon the being of the body Myſtical.

Now, that the Laying on of Hands, Heb. 6. 2. is ſuch a principle as is a part of the Foundation, *&c.* is granted by our Brethren (as we have heard) and therefore we do with good right ſtand for it, as neceſſary even to the Eſſence of a Church, *in ſuch ſort as we have even now declared.*

ed. And, that that very Laying on of Hands, Heb. 6.1,2. is that which we hold it to be, and accordingly do practise, we trust is sufficiently proved before, and that as by other Arguments, so also by this; namely, because no other Laying on of Hands practised by our Brethren, or any body else, can with any shew of Truth or Reason be called the fourth principle of Christs Doctrine, or Milk for Babes in Christ.

Our Brethren do seem to be very sensible now that the removal or extirpation of any other of the principles, *Heb. 6.* would leave (if not mortality yet) a dangerous wound or grievous maime in the Body of Religion; and therefore could they but once humbly consider, they would certainly see that their rooting out the fourth principle, is very injurious to the Body of that Doctrine contain'd in those principles, *Heb. 6.1,2.*

Were our Brethren only wanting in' respect of the truth we plead for, the case were the more tollerable; but now, together with their being wanting, they are become the enemies, and greatest oppossers of it. It is certainly (O ye Searchers) your opposition to the truth which we profess, which is, and ever was the CHIEF cause of our *divisions*, as is evident by what is to be seen in several Congregations, where, they being imbodyed before they saw

this

yet doubtleſs we may learn all the *Rudiments* or firſt principles of Chriſtianity, maugre the oppoſition of Sathan and all his Auxiliaries otherwiſe it will follow that we cannot exceed the ſtature of Babes in Chriſt.

And that we may improve our Simile (by which we have explained our ſelves in Anſwer to the moſt important of our Brethrens demands) for the defence of the truth under debate. Let it be conſidered, that look how far forth ſuch a neceſſary Member as the Hand *&c.* doth conduce, not only to the well-being but even to the very being of the body Natural ſo far doubtleſs the leaſt Foundation principle of Chriſtianity, conduceth not only to the well-being, but to the very being of the Church of Chriſt; and conſequently as he that taketh a Member from the body Natural (be it Hand or other Member) detracteth ſomewhat from the being of ſuch a body, even ſo, he that taketh away from the principles or Foundation of Chriſtianity, doth intrench upon the being of the body Myſtical.

Now, that the Laying on of Hands, Heb. 6. 2. ſuch a principle as is a part of the Foundation *&c.* is granted by our Brethren (as we have heard) and therefore we do with good right ſtand for it, as neceſſary even to the Eſſence of a Church, *in ſuch ſort as we have even now declared.*

d. And, that that very Laying on of Hands,
b. 6.1,2. is that which we hold it to be, and
ccordingly do practise, we trust is sufficiently
oved before, and that as by other Arguments,
also by this; namely, because no other Lay-
g on of Hands practised by our Brethren, or
y body else, can with any shew of Truth
Reason be called the fourth principle of
rists Doctrine, or Milk for Babes in Christ.

Our Brethren do seem to be very sensible
w that the removal or extirpation of any o-
er of the principles, *Hel.* 6. would leave (if
t mortality yet) a dangerous wound or grie-
us maime in the Body of Religion; and
erefore could they but once humbly consider,
ey would certainly see that their rooting out
e fourth principle, is very injurious to the
dy of that Doctrine contain'd in those prin-
ples, *Hel.* 6.1,2.

Were our Brethren only wanting in respect
the truth we plead for, the case were the
ore tollerable; but now, together with their
ing wanting, they are become the enemies,
d greatest opposers of it. It is certainly (O
Searchers) your opposition to the truth
hich we profess, which is, and ever was the
HIEF cause of our *divisions*, as is evident by
hat is to be seen in several Congregations,
here, they being imbodyed before they saw

this

this truth, yet abſtaining from *oppoſition* an *contradiction*, have very much Chriſtian Com munion, though they differ in their apprehen ſions about the point depending.

It is our *Saviours* rule, *He that is not againſt u is on our part*; whence it will follow, *that he is n on our part who is againſt us*: But then (our Br thren) are the men (and in a manner the on men) which are againſt us in this point Faith; And this is it which hath made tw parties, where indeed there ſhould have be but one.

You ſee then Brethren, that we lay th ground of our Non-communion with yo more upon your *oppoſing* the truth we hold, tha upon your *non-ſubmiſſion to it*. Yea beſhre your late *oppoſition* diſcovered in your late *u ſeaſonable* and *partial ſearch*: for had it n been for that, we had gained ſome groun (through the help of God) of our long *diſſen ons* and unhappy diſtractions.

Had you (or at leaſt many of you) carry it humbly and peaceably as men deſirous know the truth, it may be eaſie for you know how dear you had been to us, when yo conſider how much it was upon our hearts, imbrace you *in as large a degree of Communion we could poſſible, without violation of our principle* meerly upon conſideration of your (as w though

thought) very Christian-like offers in order to peace, *viz. That you would not only permit, but desire us to preach up the principle under consideration in your Congregations, but also that you would cease your opposition against it.* And though it is true, our endeavours for peace went slowly on (*you know the cause*) yet you ought to have had patience, for things which are carryed on with least *violence*, are commonly most *permanent*.

And here I should have given the Reader no further trouble about this particular, but that the Searchers are pleased to upbraid, and very strangely to reflect dishonour upon some among us, and upon us all for their sakes, as if we made not only many more *Fundamentals* and *Essentials* to Communion, then ever God made; but that we are so eagerly set upon making every thing fundamentall, as that every circumstantial thing is by us ready to be received into the *adoption* of Fundamentals.

But, what the Searchers should mean to suggest by their demands, as if we made *mixed Marriages*; *The eating of bloud and things strangled*: matters of *Apparel*; and the taking an *Oath* to end strife, the *Essentials* and *Fundamentals* of Churches, I cannot so much as imagine, unless it be to make themselves (as well as their Brethren ridiculous in the eyes of their Adversaries. However a necessity lyeth upon

us

us to give the Reader not only a true account of the received Doctrine of the Church touching theſe matters, but alſo the grounds or reaſons thereof; leaſt otherwiſe being prejudiced with their ſtrange reflections, their ſouls ſhould be inſnared in theſe enormities.

And firſt concerning mixed Marriages, thus we teach, *That it is unlawful (by the poſitive Law of God) for thoſe that are Members of the Viſible Church of God, to Marry with thoſe that are not of that body.* And for this we have the conſent of Holy Scripture, declaring the will of God herein, ever ſince he choſe a people out of the falſe race of *Adam* to be his Church. As appears by his revengeful ſtroke on thoſe his Sons, who in the days of *Noah took unto themſelves Wives of thoſe who were only the Daughters of men*; but not ſuch as were born from above. *Gen.* 6. 2,6,7. To which we will add our Saviours premonition and prediction, that the ſins of the laſt days will be like their's in the days of *Noah*, *Luke* 17.27, to 30. and particularly in the caſe of Marriage; for it cannot be that our Saviour in that place ſhould be oppoſite to Marriage, as it is inſtituted of God for mans uſe, no more than he is againſt eating and drinking lawfully, but it is the ſins of men committed in theſe actions reſpectively, which he diſalloweth.

How

How much the Lord disallowed such Marriages in the time of the Law is evident, *Exod.* 34.12,13,14,15,16. *Deut.* 7 3. 1 *King.* 11.1,2. *Neh.* 13. And that the same transgression in the time of the Gospel ought to be avoided, cannot be denyed, 1 *Cor.* 7. 39. and 10. 8. 2 *Cor.* 6.14.

And that the nature of the sin committed by persons so unlawfully coupled is *a carnal pollution* (to say no more) cannot be withstood, but by such as trust more to their own Arguments then to the Scripture, seeing the Law which forbids Members of the Church to marry with those that are not, *Deut.* 7.3. is interpreted of the very act, 1 *King.* 11.1,2. *Thou shalt not go in unto them, &c.* and for further Light in this matter, read and consider these Scriptures, *Act.* 15.29. *Mal.* 2.11,12. *Rev.* 2.14.

As in this case the Scriptures are plain to him that is not perverse, so we have the consent of the Generality of men professing Christianity, both ancient and modern, to omit the manifold testimonies that might be brought, I will only set down two; The first saith thus.

Marriage is not only grounded on the Law of Nature and Nations, but also on the Law of God; for it was instituted and commanded by God, and was by Christ vindicated from abuses and corrup-

tions.---In which, regard must be had to Religion, that Marriage be not made between those of different Religions. It is one thing to speak of Marriage already made; and of that which is to be made; of the former the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. 7. *But the latter is most severely prohibited,* Exod. 34. 12. &c. Deut. 7. 3. *Where a reason is rendred taken from the danger of seducing, to which* Pauls *saying agrees,* 2 Cor. 6. 14. *Be not unequally yoked with the wicked, or bear not the strange yoke with unbelievers. Sad examples we have of the events of such Marriages of the first world,* Gen. 6. *Of Solomon,* 1 King. 22. of *Ahab,* 1 King. 21. 15. of Jehosaphat, 2 King. 8. *Of* Valence *the Emperour, who by his Wife was seduced and drawn to Arianism.*

The opinion of the University of *Basil.*

It is not lawful for Catholicks to marry with Hereticks or Infidels. Rhemists Testament, in 2 *Cor* 6. 14. Where they also refer to St. *Jerom. contra Jocinian lib.* 1. *and to the Council at Laodicea, cap.* 10. 31.

The opinion of the *Rhem.*

Neither may it be inferred of these things which we have said that persons thus transgressing, *must put away their yoke-fellows,* no, *God forbid* that any should so imagine; for though it is true, God suffered that sin once to be so severely

verely punished, yet he hath no where by any *standing Law* enjoyned such a penalty; but on the contrary, hath permitted such Marriages to continue as have been unlawfully made, as is evident in the case of *Leah*, who was fraudulently given to *Jacob*, by which means *Rachel* the lawful Spouse was withheld from her Husband.

Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall man be more Righteous then his Maker, Job 4. 17.

Nothing can be said, why the Marriage of *Leah* to *Jacob* should stand, that will not as well argue the continuance of the Marriages of such as err in the case of their choice as aforesaid, the sin being rather greater in the one, than in the other; for it was not lawful to marry two Sisters, especially not in the life-time of each other. There was also in this act the sin of *Fornication* or *Adultery*. The Learned Protestants affirm the sin to be Adultery. *See Dr.* Willet *in his* Hexapla *in gen.* upon this Text.

Again, *Poligamy* (or having more Wives than one) was neither according to the *Institution of marriage*, nor warranted by any *positive Law of God*, but is rather against it. And had its rise (so far as the Scripture bears Record) from Gen. 4. 19.

a *wicked man*, yet divers ſuch Marriages were permitted (when contracted) though never commanded, and ſo never lawful by any appointment of God.

When the ſin of marrying unlawfully was puniſhed, by ſeparating the perſons ſo coupled, the *Children* alſo was put away as well as the *Wives*, which howſoever it might ſtand with the ſtate of the Jewiſh Church (and perhaps was neceſſary in reſpect of their Terreſtrial Inheritances, and the policy of their Nation) yet ſurely it would be great cruelty for men profeſſing Chriſtianity, to turn their Wives and Children out of doors, who both by *the Law of Nature, and Nations* have as clear a right to all Temporal or Domeſtical priviledges now, as the Husband himſelf in any Nation whatſoever.

Finally, ſith God hath grievouſly puniſhed this ſin of marrying contrary to his poſitive Laws in that caſe, provided for his peoples good, chiefly in things pertaining to the worſhip and ſervice of God, let all Chriſtians therefore ſtand in aw, and ſin not, but commune with their own hearts in this behalf, leaſt they provoke the Lord to plead againſt them by his judgments, for his eyes are upon the ways of men, to render to them the fruit of their doings. Chiefly thoſe, who ſin preſumptuouſly

ouſly, for ſuch do reproach the Lord, as it is written *Numb.* 15 30,31.

In the next place, ou ching *bloud and things ſtrang'ed*, we know the wiſdom of God hath forbidden the eating thereof *to* Noah *and his Sons for ever.* And when men had generally forgotten the Lord, he ſevered *Abraham* and his ſeed to be his heritage, and gave them this Law to obſerve (among others) which Law he hath eſtabliſhed in the Churches of the *Gentiles* in thoſe right needful decrees, which doth declare the repeal of the Cerimonial Law, and gives continuance to what was generally neceſſary, upon the delivery whereof the Churches were eſtabliſhed in that *Faith, by which a man is juſtifyed, and not by the works of the Law.*

Gen. 9.4.

Lev. 17.13,14,15.

Acts 15.29.

True it is *that which goeth into the man, defileth not a man*, and conſequently bloud doth not defile any man by eating thereof. But *diſobedience* which proceedeth from an unlawful deſire to that which God hath forbidden, and ſo cometh out of the man, that defileth a man; ſo then, not the fruit which *Adam* did eat, but the ſin which he committed defiled him, and the ſame will defile his Poſterity, if they covet

and take the thing which God hath forbidden.

The Doctrine of our Churches about Apparel is this, that the adorning of Christians ought not to be that of *plating the hair, wearing of Gold, nor costly array*, with Rings and toys, as the humour of phantastick persons in City or Country commonly leads them. But that instead thereof, moderation, modesty, and yet decency, according to the state and condition of persons respectively, should be observed on all sides, that so Christians might be examples to others, even in these matters. And what though some person or persons in the Church be more than ordinary set against the vain fashions of our days, and sometimes lets their zeal go a step too far, is this so offensive to our Brethren, that they can no way bear this without such a publick reprehension? I fear in so doing they may have done the Church more disservice, then those whom they inveigh against.

What the Searchers should mean about these matters being made the *Essentials of Communion*, I cannot imagine, unless they would have us to suffer men to sin in these cases without being called upon to reform, and in case of obstinacy to be withdrawn from by the Church, as disorderly persons, that they may learn to be asha-

aſhamed, (yet we mean not that they ſhould be accounted as enemies, but admoniſhed as Brethren) and ſurely, if this be their meaning, that offenders in theſe caſes muſt be let alone in their ſins; we ſhould in ſo doing looſe the order, and in time the Eſſence of Churches For ſuppoſe now a gallant of the Times ſhould deſire to be Baptized, and to walk in Communion with the Searchers, only he tells them they muſt give him leave *to marry out of the Church*, and allow him the liberty to tranſgreſs the *Apoſtolical decrees*, in eating bloud and things ſtrangled, and meats offered to Idols: and therewithall that he may *wear* Gold, *and* tread the ſteps of the *Gallants in matters of Apparel, &c.* Would the Searchers now admit ſuch a perſon into their Communion? if not, then they make theſe things as neceſſary to Church-communion as we do: And certainly that which is ground ſufficient to keep men out of the Church, will juſtifie a Church in withdrawing from ſuch, if they refuſe to reform.

To give evidence by Oath, to terminate ſtrife among men, we have not one Congregation in *England* (that I can hear of) doth oppoſe it, (indeed ſome particular perſons are doubtful in that matter, becauſe of our Saviours words, *Swear not at all*) and therefore it was very unneceſſarily put to publick obſervation, as

an Eſſential of our Church-Communion.

What the Searchers do ſuggeſt againſt ſome, as *denying that Chriſt took fleſh of the Virgin Mary*, is, I confeſs, a matter of great importance. And ſure I am, many of our Congregations never heard of ſuch a thing, till the Searchers became their informers: nor do I think there is ſo much as one Congregation in *England* that holds ſuch a thing (for particulars no man may ſpeak) however upon this occaſion I can do no leſs then proteſt againſt that Opinion as a moſt *dangerous conceit*; nothing inferiour to theirs that *deny that glorious and bleſſed perſon to be God by Nature*; for as the one denies his *Manhood*, the other denies his *Godhead*, and ſo between them we have little left to fix on, for our Redemption and Salvation.

And as I have ſhewed my diſlike to theſe conceits (to ſay nō more at preſent) ſo I hold it requiſite to proteſt my Faith in this caſe, as I have been taught, and as I have believed, and as (I truſt) I ſhall hold faſt unto the end.

That Faith which I have learned (and is the Faith of our Churches generally) is this, Firſt,

That the Lord Jeſus, the Saviour of the World is God by Nature, and therefore of one ſubſtance with the Father as touching his Godhead. He is called the only begotten of the Father.

The

The expreſs image of his Fathers perſon. The true God and Eternal Life. The Lord Almighty. It is he by whom the Worlds were made. Without him nothing was made, which was made. He is that very Lord who in the beginning laid the Foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the work of his Hands. He is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the firſt, and the laſt. He is ſaid to be before all things, and by him all things conſiſt. He is the I A M; who being in the form of God, thought not robbery to be equal with God. He is God over all bleſſed forever Amen. I conclude then, that he of whom theſe things are ſpoken, is doubtleſs God by Nature.

2. *This Lord Jeſus the Saviour of the World is man by Nature.* He was made lower then the Angels, he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but the ſeed of *Abraham* He is of one ſubſtance with his Church touching his Manhood; and for that cauſe he is not aſhamed to call them Brethren. As they are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame. He was made of a Woman, raiſed up of the fruit of *Davids* Loins according to the fleſh. He is *Davids* Son, called frequently a man; and the Son of man. He had the properties and infirmities of man in all things, ſin excepted. This his Birth, Growth, manner of

Life

Life and Death do declare. I conclude then, he of whom theſe things may be ſaid, is man by Nature. The ſhort is this.

Jeſus the Saviour of the World was before all things, and he that made all things, therefore he is God by Nature, Jeſus the Saviour of the World was born in time, and ſuffered death, or was ſlain: therefore he is man by Nature,

Yet more ſhortly
This Jeſus is Immanuel, or God-Man in one Perſon.

The Third Part.

SHeweth that our Brethrens rejecting and oppoſing the fourth principle of Chriſts Doctrine, enforceth a diſtinction in Communion (at leaſt in part) between them, and the Churches which walketh in the Religious obſervation of it; and that all diviſions which happen in the Church are not properly, but accidentally against her: as alſo that it is no abſurdity to refuſe to communicate with a people who may be allowed the appellation of a Church.

As it must ever be granted that *a Kingdom divided against it self is brought to desolation*: and is very true when apply'd to the Church of God, where *Divisions* are as *Epidemical* as in any Societies of men whatsoever: So also it must be denyed that *all manner of divisions* whichhappen within the pale of the Church are *properly against her self*.

For seeing it cannot be denyed, but that she may be and hath been corrupted divers ways from her first integrity, both in respect of the *form* and *power* of godliness, even hence is enforced, a necessity that she *be* * *reformed*. Whereupon divers worthy men in all ages have laboured *to restore the decayed parts of Christianity*, as well as to root out such things as have been obtruded by *innovation*. And surely what was the duty of some, was (more or less) the duty of all: and consequently the sin of such as put not their shoulder to the work, *Neh.* 3. 5. But much more theirs, who not only would not do it themselves, but hinder and discourage them that would. Saying in effect, as the corrupt part of the Church of old did in the days of the Prophet Jer. 44. 16, 17. *As for the word which thou hast spoken unto us in the*

* Which seldom can be done without division, by reason of Pride on the one hand, and Ignorance on the other.

the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unt
thee, but we will certainly do as we have done; w
and our Fathers, &c. Putting the mark of *An*
tiquity upon their own ways, and the note o
novelty upon the Doctrine of the Prophet o
God. Something like to which is that saying
of the Searchers where they tell us, *They ca*
well remember when Laying on of Hands was no
esteemed a Fundamental Doctrine, which yet
have reason to question, when I consider tha
themselves do hold (and say they ever did
hold) Laying on of Hands, *Heb. 6.* to be
part of the Foundation; And I think none
of its Assertors ever had less esteem o
it, then they. Neither doth the Modera
tion of its Assertors in the point of com-
munion (which it seems they held with thos
that did not receive that Doctrine, for som
time after themselves had owned it) argue
that those who received *the Doctrine of Laying*
on of Hand, did not esteem it the same which
now they do. Sith reason wills that when any
part of the Church of God attains to the
knowledge of any principles of truth, which by
the corruption of the times, hath been obscu-
red they should exercise all long-suffering and
forbearance, to see if by any means the con-
trary minded may be enlightned.

But

But now, if after all endeavours used, and patience extended, some part of the Church remain *wholly averse to Reformation*, and that in such weighty matters as the principles of Religion, it cannot be reasonable (nor is it Scriptural) * that those whom God hath enlightned, should be bound to continue with the obstinate in their by-paths; but must at length declare themselves in manner of speech like that of Joshuah, *If it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, in this principle of his Doctrine, chuse you what you will do, but as for us we are resolved therein to serve the Lord*: Agreeable whereunto is that direction of the Lord to the * Remnant that held to the truth with their whole heart, *Jer.* 15. 19. *Let them return to thee, but return not thou to them.*

1 King. 18 21.

* For it cannot be thought but that *Jeremiah* had some that stood with him. *ver.* 11.

Whence I note four things, considerable to our present occasion.

1. That the parties here spoken of, were both of the Church of God.

2. That there was a difference between them, touching some necessary part of Religion.

3. That the Lord allows this division, and encourageth the continuation of it on the part of

of those that served him perfectly, or according to his Word.

4. That the Church-state of neither part is (as yet) taken wholly away or destroyed; And therefore hence I infer this conclusion.

That in a time of the * *Churches defection in the principles, or any necessary part of Religion, there may lawfully be held a distinction in communion, between the part defective, and that which is sound or reformed, and yet the Church state of neither wholly destroyed. And by how much the principles of points of Faith are greater or lesser, by so much this distinction is to be maintain'd with greater or less severity.*

* It is not so much an errour, as the pertinacious continuance in an errour, that destroyeth the Church-state of those that are under the appellation of Christians, by true Baptism according to *Mat.* 28.

This I might confirm by the consideration of the state of the Jewish Church, under those great distractions which happen'd among them sometimes about principles of truth, referring immediately to the Majesty of Heaven *Hos.* 11. 12.

And otherwhiles about those which being neglected, would greatly impair the power of godliness among men, *Jude.* 19. 20 *chap.* In which distractions the Faithful laboured as in

were

were in the very fire to reform the part distempered, without destroying their Church-state, *Judg.* 20. and 21. Chapters, *Jer.* 17. 12. to 17. during which combustions, there must needs be a demur in the point of communion between the parts contending, as may easily be gathered from their bitter and *sanguinary* conflicts, if our very reason did not convince us.

But leaving the many and convincing Allegations which might be brought from the state of the Jewish Church, who were not denyed that Appellation, though under such defilements as rendred them unfit to Celebrate the holy Rites and Mysteries of the Law, and therefore consequently very unfit for communion with those who withstood their pollutions, which may sufficiently satisfie reasonable men (and therefore the Searchers themselves) that it is *no absurd thing to grant a people the Appellation of a Church, and yet hold them uncapable of communion with such of the Churches or Congregations of Christ* as are free from these corruptions. I will descend to those grounds which are more familiar to us, and then see how it may reach the case depending between the *Searchers* and their Brethren.

And first from *Acts* 15. 2. It appeareth that there was not only great disputation, but *dissention*

sention also in the Primitive Churches about matters of Doctrine, which word * dissention doth imply the discontinuance of communion between *Paul*, *Barnabas*, with those which did adhere to them, and that *part of the Church* which were zealous for Circumcision and the Law. And yet we do not finde that they did *one unchurch another*, but used the most effectual means that might be to put an end to the strife. And very remarkable it is, that though the Assembly at *Jerusalem* did plainly determine the point of Doctrine, yet did they forbear their censure against the persons who erred in that case, chusing to exercise all *Longanimity*, rather then severity; knowing that their power was given more for Edification then for destroying any mans attainments in the paths of Christianity. How-beit, when this lenity would not effect the Reformation of the ill manners of those corrupters or depravers of the Gospel, then did the Apostle lay greater weight upon them, who

* The word στάσις here used, is rendred by *Montanus*, *Seditione*. And so it is by our Translators in *Gal.* 5. 20. which being considered, must needs suppose (at least) a demur in point of Communion.

Hence let the Christians of this age learn Moderation. Moderation. Moderation.

wou'd

would not ceaſe to trouble the Churches, *Gal.* 5.12.

Nor is there any reaſon to doubt but that the *Judaizers* had (generally) been held at ſome diſtance in point of Communion, or privileges in the Churches before *Paul* wrote to the *Gallatians*. For ſeeing that Epiſtle written by *Paul*, *Silvanus*, and *Timotheus*, did impower the Church at *Theſſalonica to note ſuch as diſobeyed it, with a note of diſtinction* from the reſt of the Chriſtians who conform'd themſelves to its directions; Then doubtleſs that Epiſtle, *Acts* 15. written in the name of *the great Aſſembly at Jeruſalem*, did every way as much *impower all Churches* to put the like *note of diſtinction upon all that did not obey the ſame*; which *note of diſtinction*, howſoever it might lie as a *bar* againſt their preſent Communion, yet did it not deſtroy their *Brotherhood*, 2 Theſ. 3.14,15. 2 Theſ. 1.1.

So that it is further evident, that a people may be eſteemed *Brethren in Chriſt*, or *a Church of Chriſt*, and yet juſtly *be denyed communion* with other *Churches*, or *Brethren in Chriſt*. For the matter in ſhort lyeth thus. As a *Brother* is a *member*, in reſpect of that Congregation or Church to which he is immediately related. So, a *particular Congregation* is but a *member* in

reſpect of the Church univerſal. As therefore a man may be called a *Chriſtian Brother*, and yet juſtly (for ſome cauſe) be denyed preſent communion with his fellow *Brethren*; So, a *Congregation* may be accounted a *Church of Chriſt*, and yet juſtly be denyed communion by *her Siſter Churches*, and chiefly when ſhe is ſuch a Church as *cauſes diviſions and offences, contrary to the Doctrine which the Primitive Churches received from the Apoſtles.* All which being conſidered, may well ſerve to ſatisfie our Brethren, that we commit no abſurdity in refuſing to communicate with them, though we grant them the Appellation of the Church of Chriſt, and Brethren in particular as before we have ſaid.

Diviſion againſt unſufferable errours, and corruptions are not againſt the Church, but for the Church.

Having ſhewed that all manner of Diviſions which happen in the Church, are not properly againſt her they being after a ſort rather *neceſſary* for her Reformation, then to bring her to *deſolation*, when corruption in Doctrine or manners have made in vaſions upon her (Though it muſt needs be granted that *even thoſe diviſions* are accidentally againſt the Church, and that as for other cauſes, ſo chiefly, for that they are a ſcandal to the World and

and a ſtumbling to weak Chriſtians.) It behoveth that we briefly ſhew what we mean by diviſions which are properly againſt the Church, and they are ſuch as theſe.

1. *When both parties contending ſtrive to ſet up ſome ſinful thing, or their own devices.*

2. *When they divide about that which is not neceſſary, but indifferent only.*

3. *When the point in queſtion is not ſo much the thing ſought for as revenge upon the perſons againſt whom the controverſie is held.* Thoſe and ſuch like tend only to the ruine of Churches, having no tendency at all to Edification.

The firſt of theſe ſhewed it ſelf among the *Corinthians*, when they ſtrove to ſet up men; ſome this man, and others that, and this in oppoſition one unto another, 1 *Cor.* 1. 12. Which folly hath been the overthrow of Congregations, where mens perſons have been admired, and truth neglected.

The ſecond is rebuked, Rom. 14. *But why doſt thou judge thy Brother, or ſet at nought thy Brother?* (meaning for things indifferent) *Therefore who art thou that judgeſt another mans Servant? to his own Maſter he ſtands or falls, yea he ſhall be holden up, for God is able to make him ſtand.*

The third is detected, Gal. 5. 15. for whatſoever the queſtion was, this was their ſin, they

did *bite one another.* Thus men may *hold the truth in unrighteousness*, and without Charity, *preach Christ meerely of envy to add thereby some affliction to the bonds of their brethren.* Those kind of divisions in the ages bordering upon the Apostles *became the Heathens sport (and the Christians shame) upon their open Theaters.*

Let us therefore now return to consider the Nature of that distemper which hath befallen our body about the fourth principle of Christ his Doctrine, *Heb.6. 2.*

The Searchers have declared it to be the sin of Schism; and the part distempered to be only the Congregations under the practice of Laying on of Hands, as is evident from the whole Contexture of their search, and the direcion of the Epistle prefixed to it, as if there were nothing amiss in this matter on their part who (if I may so speak) have made (and defended) a Schism in the principles of the Doctrine of our Lord, and therewithall divided themselves from a principle thereof.

And this word SCHISM is taken by the Searchers not in a mild sense, such as wherein it may be taken by propriety of Speech to signifie division in some lower consideration, as the word is translated, 1 *Cor.* 1.10. But they have hoysed it in their application of it to the Congregations, professing the fourth principle

t)

to the moſt extream ſignification, even that of *Sedition*; yea to ſuch a degree, as if we *unchurched** *all Churches but our ſelves*. As if it were a light matter to brand all thoſe Churches for *Schiſmaticks*. But they ſhould have conſidered that bare abſtaining from communion, chiefly at the Table of the Lord (which is all that hath been done *generally*, if ſo much have been done) and that upon ſuch *immergent* occaſion, as hath (at leaſt in the time of hot contention) been given for it, is far from being ſufficient to bear them out in this their *raſh charge* againſt their Brethren. Seeing our Saviour himſelf puts a bar for coming to the Altar, while differences between Brother and Brother, only remains undecided, which being duly conſidered, may juſtly cauſe the ſober Chriſtian to be afraid of ſuch a communion as (I perceive) the Searchers would (*hand over head*) involve us into.

* Which how untrue that is, their own Search doth teſtifie, for there they confeſs that we own them for Churches at ſome turns, (they ſay) but ſurely, (to let go this taunt) what, we confeſs them to be at any time, we confeſs them to be at all times, and that is a Church of Chriſt, though irregular in point of Conſtitution.

Now, what hath been done by ſome *particular perſons* among us in reſpect of *Church-rend-*

ings, or unchurching other Churches through *ignorance* or *preposterus zeal*, as I do not perfectly know, so I will not in any wise go about to justifie. But sure I am, it is no good ground for you to asperse all our Congregations with such mens actions; no more then the like preposterous actions by some among you (for such there hath been, both particular persons and Congregations) will justifie us to fasten the like reproach upon you, which hitherto we have not done, nor intend to take the advantage of your procreation to do it now.

And what though there hath been (during the time of these contentions and oppositions) a distinction in communion between the Congregations aforesaid, held to be needful, at least in some things (wherein Christians communicating one with another, cannot be very comfortable without unity in their Doctrine and practice) yet sure this hath been done (generally) without contracting the guilt of *Schism* on either side, in respect of all such as in the midst of all these *dissentions*, have maintain'd the great engagement of *Charity* towards one another. And for those that have not so done, its justly feared the guilt hath been as great on the one side, as on the other.

This

This *diſtinction in communion*, hath been held (I preſume) by all wiſe Chriſtians, rather of neceſſity, then for any delight they have had in it, partly for that the truth in queſtion would otherwiſe have been ſlighted *as a thing but at moſt indifferent*; And there is no readier way to deſtroy any truth, then to let it paſs with ſuch an eſtimation. And partly, for that contention would ever have been riſing between Members of the ſame particular community, and no means remaining to paciſie thoſe diviſions. For, what pious Paſtor of the Church can juſtifie his admitting ſome to the Lords Table without imbracing (nay though oppoſing) the fourth principle of Chriſtianity, and yet with the ſame breath deny another that liberty? The truth is, this diſparity in judgment and practice muſt admit of one thing out of two (at leaſt ſo long as the Spirit of contradiction worketh,) *viz.* either that the parties diſſenting may ſit down in diſtinct Congreations, without the offence or grudging one againſt another, or elſe it muſt admit of diſpencing with moſt of the principles of our Religion, one by one till indeed we have none left intire; as will appear by ſingling them apart, and yielding to each opinioniſt the plea which our Brethren do uſe in the caſe depending, which in effect is this.

Why ſhould we not ſit down at the Lords Table with you; Seeing we own all the principles of Chriſts Doctrine as you do (which yet I fear, *&c.*) except the fourth? and as touching that, we ſay and believe, that *the Laying on of Hands in* Heb. 6.2. *is a principle of Chriſts doctrine, and a part of the foundation*; yet we deny that Laying on of Hands, which you hold to be that principle. This plea being admitted, a ſecond comes and pleads thus,

Let us build with you, for we own all the principles of Religion, *Heb.* 6.1,2. as you do, except that of Faith, and yet we ſay Faith is a principle according to *Heb.* 6. 1. but we deny that faith which you ſay is there meant to be that principle.

A third comes and ſays, we have right to ſit down in communion with you, for we do own all the principles, *Heb.* 6. only the Doctrine of Baptiſms which you ſay is there meant, we deny to be a principle of Chriſts Doctrine, and do ſay that it is your own *innovation* or *tradition*, yet we own the Doctrine of Baptiſms.

A fourth pretends they own all the principles, *&c.* only that Reſurrection of the dead, which we ſay is a principle of Chriſtianity, they term an *Humane innovation*, yet they profeſs to believe the Reſurrection.

Finally

Finally, there comes others and profeſſes that they own all the principles of Gods Oracles, *Heb. 6. &c.* but withall they deny with *Origen*, that eternal judgment which we hold, and ſay that there ſhall be an univerſal Salvation; and yet they own with him a judgment which is eternal. And upon theſe pretenſions they demand the priviledges of Chriſtians among us in all things.

Now admitting laying on of Hands (as we hold) to be as undoubtedly a principle of Chriſts Doctrine, as any of the reſt (as that is our caſe.) Let our Brethren reſolve us how we ſhall diſpenſe with them in rejecting and oppoſing that principle, and yet do nothing at all to the prejudice of any other principle, or part of the Foundation?

Certain it is (as before we have hinted) there is no Artifice of Sathan ſo likely to wear out this or any other truth, as to make it ſubject to the wills of men, *viz.* to admit men to the ſame degree of Eſtimation and fitneſs for communion in the Church, though they deny this truth, as if they owned it. And whilſt our Brethren are labouring with all their might to bring the fourth principle of Chriſts Doctrine to this ſtate of ſubjection, others are as buſily tampering with the Doctrine of Baptiſm, and have prevailed to the great reproach of

thoſe

thoſe Chriſtians who have ſuffered themſelves and the truth to be thus abuſed.

Open oppoſition though too bad, yet is more advantagious to the truth, then ſuch pretended friendſhip; for truth being oppoſed, hath ſtrength and Authority to withſtand its greateſt Adverſary. *But if once ſubtil men creep into the Church under a ſpecious pretenſe of waiting for the knowledge of ſuch truths as they have a deſign to overthrow*; theſe prove the greateſt prophaners and ſubverters of the ways of God in the world. And what devourer ſhall we be able to keep out (that hath but craft to get in) if once this door of diſpenſing with principles of Religion be opened?

Aſſuredly had thoſe perſons, *Acts* the 10. (the remiſſion of whoſe ſins was evidenced from Heaven very eminently) been admitted to communion, without ſubmitting to the Baptiſm of Repentance for remiſſion of ſin (as *Peters* queſtion, *can any man forbid water, that theſe ſhould not be Baptized, which received the Holy Ghoſt?* ſeems to intimate that ſome ſuch thought might poſſibly dart it ſelf into the breaſts of ſome.) It had certainly made *null* that ordinance almoſt *totally*, for *who doth not now-a-days preſently ſuppoſe himſelf to be baptized with the Spirit?*

Our

Our Brethren demand of us, *whether thoſe qualifications which gives right to Baptiſm, do not give right to the Lords Table?* The anſwer is eaſie, for Faith and Repentance (as they ſay) gives right to Baptiſm, but not ſo for the Lords Table, for though Baptiſm be no qualification for it ſelf, yet it is a very neceſſary qualification for the Lords Table. But that we may reach the utmoſt that can lie in this queſtion, we anſwer further: And firſt,

By granting that thoſe that are rightly baptized, have thereupon a general right to all the priviledges and holy Ordinances in the Church of God; and ſo to the Lords Table among the reſt: But then ſecondly, we muſt diſtinguiſh between this *general right*, and *a regular capacity* for the *immediate participation of theſe priviledges*. The children of *Ephraim*, *&c.* 2 *Chron.* 30. 18, 19, 20. had a right to the Paſſeover in general with the reſt of the *Iſraelites*, becauſe they were Circumciſed, *&c.* yet ſith they were not cleanſed according to the Puriſication of the Sanctuary, they were not in a regular capacity to eat the Paſſeover with the reſt of the *Iſraelites*, therefore *Hezekiah* made ſupplication for them, and it was permitted in that ſtrait, (for they could not do what they would becauſe of the ſhortneſs of the time) that they ſhould eat the Paſſeover otherwiſe then

as

as it was written in the Law, but this was an extraordinary case as we have shewed before. Again, suppose I know that my Brother hath something against me, when I am going to the Lords Table; this doth not take away my right from the Table of the Lord which I have in general with other Christians, only now I am not in a regular capacity to participate. And what though those that are baptized according to Christs command have right to the Lords Table as aforesaid, yet may they not be *preposterous* in taking their right; for there is an orderly way to partake of our priviledges. And we say and have proved that the next step * or principle in Christianity to holy Baptism, is, *that we wait upon God in prayer with the Imposition of Hands for the holy Spirit of promise.* This our Brethren do not only neglect, but they *oppose it* as an *humane innovation.* Upon this, not *a brother only*, but *the Church hath something against them*, they refuse to be reconciled, unless we allow them in their disobedience, at least so far as to leave undone that which is their duty to do: hence it appeareth, that whatsoever our Brethren may say for them-

* Let no man here object, prayer and hearing the word, which as they are of necessity antecedent to our Membership, so they are of perpetual use in the Church.

themſelves in reſpect of their right to the Lords Table, yet we find that in them, which puts them into an incapacity for their *immediate participation*; at leaſt with thoſe Congregations, who religiouſly obſerve that order wherein the truths of God are propoſed to be obſerved.

But here peradventure our Brethren will ſay, *they do not remember that we have ought againſt them in this caſe*; To which it may be anſwered, that makes the caſe never the better in reſpect of them that do know their error; no more then my Brothers juſtifying himſelf in his treſpaſs againſt me, doth leſſen his treſpaſs, which is ſo far from that, that in truth makes it greater, and there is now a neceſſity that theſe two be reconciled before they ſit down at the Lords Table *together*.

If yet it ſhould be ſaid, *we take for granted the very thing denyed, viz.* That our Brethren are offenders in the caſe depending. The anſwer is firſt, this objection will help thoſe that deny the Baptiſm of Repentance againſt our Brethren, for denying them communion in their Congregations, as much as it will help our Brethren againſt us, for though our Brethren ſay they offend in omitting that part of Chriſts Doctrine, yet they deny it. 2. Though our Brethren will needs ſuppoſe the caſe to be doubt-

doubtful whether what we hold *in the case de*
pending be true or no, it is out of doubt wit
us, and so much the more as by how much ou
Brethren labour to raise new doubts and scru
ples about it, according to that true saying

When Black is rightly posited with White,
Then black's most dark, and white doth shin
most bright.

The Searchers insist much upon their *offe*
in order to the *accommodating* the differenc
depending. To which I answer, had they per
sisted in that candour and condescending tem
per which lately some of them pretende
to. It is not doubed, but the end might hav
been happy, *provided that their hearts were r*
right according to those pretensions. But to b
plain, by all that we can as yet understand, som
of them were more politick than pious in suc
their endeavours, *of which let this their Sear*
be an evidence to Posterity. For, even when w
were busily endeavouring to answer their co
descending proposals, with the greatest com
plyance, which with a good conscience w
could, even then comes our Brethren forth wi
a *fire-brand of Schism and Sedition*, and claps
on the backs of our Congregations. An
therewithall arms themselves with the mo

Cla

Clandeſtine and ſubtil oppoſition againſt the principle under conſideration, wherewith they have at any time (ſo far as I know) as yet advanced themſelves againſt it, which yet will make as little for their *Credit*, or the Churches *Comfort*, as their former attempts of this kind have done (unleſs God whoſe wiſdom can bring good out of evil, turn it to our advantage) *for no weapon formed againſt the truth ſhall proſper.*

And though it is true there was ſome unhappy obſtructions of our peace before they Printed their Search, ſo it is as true that the hypocriſie of ſome of the Searchers was the cauſe thereof.

Nor need they make ſo much of their permitting the Countrey Elders to preach up Laying on of Hands among them, when they conſider the hot oppoſition which ſome of them met with, as ſoon as they had done. And its known from ſome of the moſt plain-hearted among them, that though we have been deſired to preach the Doctrine of Laying on of Hands among them, yet *

it is more to pleaſe our humours (which our ſouls abhor) then that they have any expectation to ſee the truth by ſuch preaching.

* *Ex ore judicium.*

Nei-

Neither is the complaint of our Brethren juſt at this time, how that they, or many of them would have ſubmitted to Laying on of Hands, did we not prohibit them communion with thoſe, with whom they formerly walked. For they know that what ever hath been, when contention was in the higheſt about this matter; yet there hath been as much forbearance that way of late, as could reaſonably be deſired, and this condeſcention (perhaps) might ſtill have encreaſed had you as you promiſed, ſeaced your oppoſition againſt the truth by us profeſſed. But now you have revived the whole Controverſie, in moſt of the Congregations in *England*: And therefore as the cauſe of our diviſion at the firſt was much on their part, who divided the principles of Chriſtianity and themſelves from a principle thereof, ſo the revival, and aggravation (with the prevention of our concurrance at leaſt in many things) will be found at the door of the Searcher, when he ſearcheth well his own Habitation.

When we conſider *Paul's* charge to *Timothy*, *to withdraw from ſuch as had a form of Godlineſs, denying the power thereof.* And his command to the Church at *Theſſalonica*, *to withdraw from every Brother that walketh diſorderly*; we cannot but diſlike the tendency of your 19th. demand, as if it would follow, that becauſe there

were

were ſome ſinfully ſuffered in ſome Churches of old, *who taught Gods people to commit fornication*, and *to eat meats offered to Idols*, and *to hold a community of Women* (a thing ſo beaſtly as ſcarce fit to be named) therefore we may not withdraw from ſuch Churches as ſuffer ſuch things. Now! when yet its evident that the Lord charges thoſe ſins ſo deeply upon thoſe that ſuffered thoſe Abominations, that without ſpeedy Repentance their Church-ſtate muſt be removed. But ſurely our Brethren cannot be ignorant that the Lord commends ſuch of the Churches in *Aſia*, as could not bear, but *unchurched thoſe* that were evil, *who ſaid they were Jews, and Apoſtles, and were not, but were the Synagogue of Sathan*: and how vehemently he reproves thoſe that did not thus ſeparate from ſuch evil workers, whether Congregations, or particular Members, for ſure there is but one Law for few or for many in this caſe.

True it is, That God had mercy for great offenders upon repentance, and there muſt be admoniton before they be ſpewed out of the mouth. But what will this avail their caſe, who being intreated and exhorted to turn from the errour of their way, and diligently taught concerning the truth, yet perſiſt in their oppoſition.

The ſlight expoſition which the Searchers gives us of 2 *John* 7. 9. Verſes, is no more to be commended (as I conceive) then their Adverſaries unwary ſyllogiſm from thence: Seeing it is not all that confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh, that hath fellowſhip with the Father and the Son. For that is the ſenſe of the Searchers, or elſe they muſt tell us how many of Chriſts Doctrines or teachings muſt be owned as neceſſary to mens communion with God and Chriſt; which will puzzle the Searchers as much as any body elſe, their flouriſhes and reflexions againſt others notwithſtanding. Nor need we ſay much to our Brethrens demands, which they ground on a *ſuppoſition of the truth of our opinion*, conſidering what we have ſaid already, for if that we hold *be the truth, it is ſuch a truth as* may not be diſpenſed with or neglected without manifeſt danger to the reſt of the principles of Religion, as hath been ſhewed; It ſhall therefore now ſuffice for the tryal of the conſciences of our Brethren in this matter, that we appeal to them touching the like ſervice in anothor caſe, namely, the *Laying on of Hands in the Ordination of Officers in the Church*, which ſome of them will have to be that *principle*, Heb. 6. though others of them *reject that as erroneous*, ſo that our Brethren had little cauſe to upbraid us about

about ſome *differing apprehenſions* about *the end of that Miniſtration*, ſith themſelves are divided both about the *end* and *the principle it ſelf*. I ſay, put caſe now, that ſome among you ſhould deny the Layng on of Hands on Officers *to be inſtituted of God*, and tell you it is *an innovation of man* (to ſay no worſe) and that you have no command from God for it; and thereupon they bring all the Arguments againſt you which you deviſe againſt us. And not only ſo, but they carry on all the Affairs of the Church without any regard had to that orderly way of ordaining men to Office by prayer with the Laying on of Hands. Only, becauſe its your *humour* to have men ſo ordained, therefore in condeſcention to your *weakneſs*, and that they may the better *bring you off that uſage* they permit you once, twice or thrice, *&c.* to preach up ſuch a thing in their Congregations. Do you now make ſo little conſcience of that Laying on of Hands which you practice, and that as a part of the Foundation (ſay ſome of you) as that you could maintain a free and chearful communion with ſuch perſons? Howſoever you may ſhuffle in this caſe, conſidering the liberty which you encline to in the other, yet ſurely were you free from that temptation, you would find no ſmall difficulties to hold ſuch communion with thoſe who ſhould not only

make void, but even deſpiſe (for 'tis no better) that wholſome and Divine order which God hath left for the Government of his Houſe.

As for *general Aſſemblies*, which are ordained for general Controverſies, and which through the bleſſing of God are the beſt expedient under the Sun, for compoſing diviſions in the Churches. Here the liberty of Chriſtians ſhould be; yea, muſt be maintain'd, though they differ right much in their opinions in matters of Religion, and therefore we have (indeed) very Chriſtianly admitted the Searchers to ſuch our Aſſemblies; knowing well, that not only the Chriſtians in the *ages bordering upon the Primitive*, but even *the Apoſtles of our Lord did allow* Chriſtians of very different perſwaſions, freely to deliberate on things propounded in ſuch Aſſemblies. But yet we little thought that our Brethren would have abuſed us in the ſight of the World, for this our Chriſtian reſpect towards them, as if we were inconſiſtant with our principles in ſuch our condeſcentions, unleſs we alſo communicate with them at the Lords Table. Surely this kind of dealing is unlikely to effect the peace and concord of our too much divided Congregations.

For my part, I could heartily wiſh that all the Congregations of Chriſtians in the World

that

that are baptized according to the appointment of Christ, *Matth.* 28. 19. *Mark* 16. 16. *Acts* 2. 38. would make one *Consistory* (at least some times) to consider of the matters in difference among them. For, if this be not admitted, there is no means under Heaven remaining (as I conceive) to heal their divisions, and consequently to obtain that peace which should rule in the hearts of all Gods people, because they are thereunto called in one (universal) body.

And herein (I conceive) an union in the main may be held, though in our particular communities, for the avoiding (otherwise inevitable) inconveniencies, we are constrained to hold some distinctions. For, it is one thing *to forsake* the Church of Christ, and another to cease communicating with such a particular Congregation, as in the time of Reformation, will needs stay behind in the steps of irregularity. The first can be no other than Schism, sith there can be no cause to forsake the Church of God, though there may be cause to *forbear* communicating with some particular Members or Congregations thereof. The other is so far from *Schism*, that it is more truly called *Reformation*, nor doth it follow that because we refuse to communicate with our Brethren in their irregular proceedings in the matters of

Religion, that therefore we reject them in those principles of truth which they do religiously observe, and zealously profess: neither is our distinguishing our Congregations from theirs, so much *a separation* from them, as a *Reformation* of our selves, so that the 10. and 11. demands of the *Searchers* might well have been spared, sith as things stand among us, they are not only unnecessary, but I fear may prove very pernicious to the peace of our Churches.

Let me now conclude with a free Word to the Brethren of both perswasions; And that is, to beseech you to consider one another as Brethren, and not as Adversaries, and as Brethren to put on Charity one towards another; and chiefly you that are zealous for the principle under debate; the more you walk in the truth, the more it concerns you to shew forth your works with meekness of wisdom, and to abound in that gift of the Spirit which hopeth and believeth all things, which doubtless will teach you to believe this of your Brethren in general, that if they saw the truth as you do, they would be nothing less zealous for it then your selves, and consider in the mean time as they are erroneous in our judgments (and certainly erroneous they are) so we seem to be to them. And though the consequence of their rejecting one principle of Religion, do indeed endan-

endanger the reſt, yet let us believe, that if they were awar of this, they would abhor ſuch an opinion as doth ſo prejudice the Doctrine of Chriſt.

Our Brethren do err, it is true, but they err with a conſcience void of errour, becauſe (as may be hoped) they know not that they err. Now Charity ſuffereth long, and is kind, is not puffed up againſt any that zealouſly ſerve the Lord, though perhaps they err from many of his Precepts. Charity is not the companion of that *exceſs of indiſcreet zeal* which abounds in ſome men, for it knoweth that temperance is as neceſſary in our zeal, as mercy is in judgment, violent Spirits ſeldom or never doth the Church ſervice without diſſervice; And let us conſider that the truth we ſtand for, hath no need of our paſſions to defend it; no, its own authority will ſupport it againſt the ſtrongeſt oppoſition, therefore *let your moderation appear to all men.*

To the Brethren on the other ſide, Let me thus ſpeak, beware that you deſpiſe not your Brethren eſpecially you that are men of parts, becauſe you being taken for Brethren of high degree, muſt now if you own the truth which you have oppoſed, ſeem to be abaſed. You that have been Inſtructers of the ſimple, muſt now learn of Babes, or at leaſt ſuch things as pertains

tains to Babes. Whereupon if you ask your conſciences, I am perſwaded you (or at leaſt ſome of you) have met with ſuch reaſonings, as once a Wiſe man met with upon an occaſion like to this, when he reaſoned with his friend after this manner. *Becauſe others are gone before, is it a ſhame for us to come after? or is it not rather a great ſhame not at all to go after them.* Aug. Confeſſ. l. 8. c 8.

And let it be conſidered how upon the diſcovery of the right manner of Baptizing (for men had forſaken the way of God both in the ſubject and manner of that Ordinance) there was found a kind of neceſſity for Chriſtians of ancient ſtanding, as it were to begin again. And yet ſome then, (as you now) was by no means to be prevailed with, but would (at leaſt) have the way of baptizing left to every mans liberty (as you would have the 4th principle) and now the Lord hath pleaded that cauſe, when no other endeavour could prevail, for thoſe that ſtumbled at that truth, are in a manner wholly extinct in this Nation, whilſt thoſe that imbraced it are bleſſed with great encreaſe. And what ſhall befall you if to your diſobedience you ſhall add pertinacity, a little time may determine.

By that which hath been ſaid you may perceive (Brethren) how the caſe ſtands betwen us,

us, gladly would we have communion with you in all Christian priviledges, but your willful want (as of some may be feared *) of one principle of Christian Religion, and therewithall your endeavours to deprive our Churches of it (as is too evident to be denyed) puts a stop to that which is so much desired, and how it shall be obtain'd is the business for time to determine, and O that the set time were come. Mean while we must leave *the Searchers, and their search; our selves*, and our *Sigh*, to him that will cause *all the Churches to know that it is he that searcheth the heart, and tryeth the Reins, and will give to every man according as his work shall be.*

* At least some of of you.

A

A Defence of the Offices of Apoſtles; and of the continuance thereof in the Church till the end.

FOr men to ſtrain more at the Word Apoſtle, [as ſome do at the word Biſhop] then at the work or Office ſignified thereby, is no other thing (as I conceive) then groundleſs humility, or hypocritical ſubtilty; ſeeing it is evident that thoſe Titles are as lowly as any that can be given to ſute with the matter, thereby intended.

The firſt ſignifying a *Meſſenger, or one ſent*, the other an *Overſeer*. Wherefore that I may avoid this humour, I will not fear to call old things by their old names, and therefore ſhall call the Officers of the Church by the ſame names which the wiſdom of God hath given them, not to make them proud, but rather humbled, and to be as a *Memento* concerning the work, which by their Office they ſtand engaged to do.

Nor

Nor ſhall we need at this time to ſay much of the Officers of the Church generally, but only of the Office of Apoſtles, or meſſengers, & this becauſe ſome of our Brethren do not only doubt (but endeavour to make others doubtful alſo, whether God hath given to his Church ANY Apoſtles or Meſſengers to ſucceed the Primitive Apoſtles, as a conſtant Miniſtery in the Church to the end of the World.

And albeit, we ſay that the Apoſtles have Succeſſours (as well as Biſhops, *&c.*) yet our meaning is not that there are any that ſucceed them in all reſpects; for there was in the Office of the chief Apoſtles, ſomething ordinary and fixed, and ſomething extraordinary and temporary, the latter was, firſt their immediate miſſion; * Secondly, they learned their Doctrine either from the Sacred Lips of the Lord Chriſt, or by infallible Revelation, and were not taught it by man, as * *Timothy* and other their ſucceſſours were, *Hel.* 2. — *Great ſalvation, which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him.*

* Math. 28. 19, 20. Gal. 1. 1.

* 2 Tim. 1. 13.

That which — we have heard, which we have ſeen with our eyes, which we have look'd upon, and our hands

hands have handled of the word of Life.--- that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you 1 John 1.1,5. *But I certifie you Brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me was not after man, for I neither received it of man,* * *neither was I taught it but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ* Gal.1.11.

* And yet it is true that *Paul* was taught the knowledge of some of the principles of Religion by *Ananias*. Acts 9. 6,17, 18. Acts 22. 16.

Thirdly, They were to lay a Foundation, and to propose a form of Doctrine for other Teachers to build on, and to keep as their pattern, and a Standard by which to trie others Doctrine and Spirits, 1 Cor.3.10.----*as a wise Master builder I have laid the Foundation, and another builds thereon. He that is of God heareth us, he that is not of God heareth not us, hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the Spirit of errour,* 1 John 4.6.

* I. e. as a Concomitant; not as a part of their Office.

Fourthly, they were Necessarily endowed with the gift of Tongues, Miracles, &c. to demonstrate that they were sent of God, and that the Doctrine was from Heaven, Luke 24.49 ----*But tarry ye in the City of* Jerusalem *until ye be endued with power from on high,* 2 Cor.12.12 *Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in Signs and Wonders, and mighty deeds*

eeds. In theſe and the like reſpects the Apoſtles have no ſucceſſours, for if they have, then muſt their Words and Writings have the like force, and Authority, and then we ſhould be ſtill receiving new Oracles, and never know when the whole Councel of God was made known to us.

Now the things which were ordinary and fixed, in the Apoſtolical Office were ſuch as theſe, their Authority to preach the Goſpel in all places, at all times, to all perſons, as occaſion and opportunity by Gods providence was given to them, Mark. 16. 15. *Preach the Goſpel to every Creature*, Math. 28. 19, 20. *Teach all Nations---and lo I am with you, always even to the end of the world*; this work could not be tied only to the chief or Primitive Apoſtles, with they were to leave the World by death Zech. 1. 5, 6. *The Fathers where are they, and the Prophets do they live for ever?* Acts 20. 29. *I know after my deceaſe grievous Wolves ſhall enter in.*

Secondly, their unwearied diligence in Teaching both the Churches and Paſtours in all the will of God, their care for the well-ſetting and governing the Churches, Acts 20. 31. *Therefore watch and remember that by the ſpace of three years I ceaſed not to warn every one night and day with tears*; 2 Cor. 11. 28.---*that which cometh up-*

upon me daily, the care of all the Churches, 2 Pet 1. 12,13,14,15.

I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things---yea, I think it meet as long as I am in this Tabernacle to stir you up by putting you in remembrance, moreover I will endeavour that you may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

The rest will I set in order when I come; and perfect that which is lacking concerning your Faith.

Tit. 1. 5. *For this cause left I thee in Creet, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee.*

3. Their being *set for a defence of the Gospel against false Apostles*, Phil. 1. 16, 17. *the one preach Christ of Contention--supposing to add affliction to my bonds. The other of Love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the Gospel.*

Fourthly, To strenthen the Hands of particular Pastours against Usurpers, and such as despise the Ministers of Christ, Acts 20. *And from* Meletus *he sent to* Ephesus, *and called the Elders of the Church. And when they were come unto him, he said unto them---of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things---Therefore watch, &c.* 3 John 5. *Beloved thou dost faithfully whatsoever thou dost to the Brethren, and to strangers*

gers---I wrote to the Church, but Diotrephes *who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them receiveth us not, wherefore if I come, I will remember his deeds that he doth, prating against us with malicious words*, 1 Tim. 1. 17. *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour*, Gal. 4. 17, 18. *They zealously affect you, but not well: yea, they would exclude us, that you might affect them.*

Now that the chief Apoſtles have ſome to ſucceed them in the Apoſtleſhip, as we have affirmed will appear firſt from the conſideration of that Commiſſion which our Lord gave for the Teaching of the Nations, or for the preaching the Goſpel to every Creature.

Secondly, from the duration of thoſe gifts in the Church which our Lord obtained and gave, by virtue of his Aſcention.

Thirdly, from the conſideration of the Primitive Churches, their having ſuch Apoſtles or Meſſengers.

Fourthly, from the practice of thoſe who moſt queſtion the neceſſity of Meſſengers at this day.

Fifthly, from the ſtate of the World, their neceſſity to be taught the truth as it is in Jeſus. And in regard of the danger they lie under by means of falſe Apoſtles.

And

And first it is evident from *Math.* 28.19,20. and *Mark* 16. 15. that it is the will of God that the Nations be taught, and that every Creature should have the Gospel preached unto them, wherefore it remaineth that we stick to one thing out of three, and that is, either some body in special are bound to preach the Gospel to those that are without; or else that all Christians are equally bound to perform this work if capable in respect of gifts, or else that this work ended with the Apostles.

If the Church have not a Ministery of Messengers, then none are bound by virtue of Office to preach to the Nations.

The last will not be said by any that considers, that the making one branch of that Commission, *Math.* 28. and *Mark* 16. void or not obliging or binding to the Church now, or any persons in it, is in effect to make the whole commission void, for if none have power by virtue of this Commission to teach the Nations, how can it be that any hath power from hence to baptize? both works being commanded as it were in one breath. Nor can the Church observe all things whatsoever Christ commanded his Apostles, if they be not to observe this great work, to preach the Gospel to the World.

Nei-

Neither can it rationally be ſaid that this work belongs to every gifted Chriſtian alike; becauſe the imployment of the Goſpel conſiſts in divers Offices, and all ſuch Members have not the ſame Office.

2. Again, meer gifts do not make men Officers (and that the Teaching, *Math.* 28. and the preaching, *Mark* 16. is a preaching not by virtue of gift only, but by Authority alſo cannot be denied) 1 Tim. 1. 18. *This charge I commit to Son Timothy*, 1 Tim. 6. 20. *O Timothy keep that which is committed to thy truſt*, 2 Tim. 2. 2. *and the ſame commit thou to faithful men, and let theſe alſo firſt be proved, and then let them uſe the Office of a Deacon being found blameleſs*, 1 Tim. 3. 10. Surely if this care muſt be had, that none uſe the Office of a Deacon, but upon ſuch proof had of their fitneſs, it cannot be imagined that the greater matters of the Goſpel ſhould be taken in hand without the like care and circumſpection.

3. They that would have this work of preaching to the World, no mans concern, by virtue of Office, whiles they ſpeak againſt Meſſengers, do make more than any body elſe, otherwiſe we may well enquire how ſhall they preach except they be ſent? *Rom.* 10. We conclude then, if thoſe that preach muſt be ſent; and if that commiſſion, *Math.* 28, *Mark* 16.

be yet in force, then the Apoſtles have ſome to ſucceed them in their Office Apoſtolical.

Which is yet more evident by the conſideration of thoſe gifts which our Lord obtained and gave to his Church by virtue of his Aſcention, Eph. 4. 11. *And he gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtours, and Teachers, for the perfecting the Saints for the work of the Miniſtery, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt. Till we all come into the unity of the Faith*, &c. *See* 1 Cor. 12. 28. It were certainly a very dangerous thing to ſay that any of theſe gifts are taken away from the Church of God, albeit ſome of them are perhaps but rarely found, at leaſt in that part of the World which do profeſs the name of Chriſt; eſpecially Miracles, *&c.* which yet may not be ſaid to be wholly abſent from the Churches in theſe days, and in this Nation, of which I could ſay ſomething, partly from ſuch information as I know to be true, and partly from what I have heard and ſeen in that behalf. But as touching the gift of Offices here repeated, why any of them ſhould be taken away from the Church, I ſee not any ground at all, they being ſo evidently fixed in the Church *till* the whole Church be compleated; and the uſe of theſe Offices reſpectively, as before we have defined, ſo needful, that the

Church

Church would eaſily find the want of them if indeed they be taken from her as we ſhall ſee more anon. And although we ſaid before that the gift of Miracles, Tongues, &c. was neceſſary to the Office of the chief Apoſtles, and yet was only temporary: and now ſay the gifts of Miracles may not be denyed to have a being or continuance in the Church. In this there is no contradiction; for, the making thoſe gifts temporary (or but for a time) as they were neceſſary to the Office of thoſe which firſt preached the Goſpel, doth not at all conclude that they are wholly abnegated, or taken away from the Church. And when we ſay that theſe gifts were neceſſary to the Office of the chief Apoſtles, our meaning not that Miracles was a part of their office, but only a neceſſary concomicant thereto; ſo that though this concomitant ſhould not befound, it is no prejudice to the Office conſidered as we have defined it.

We come now to enquire into the order of the Primitive Churches, who certainly had many Apoſtles beſide thoſe that were Foundation layers and Maſter-builders, ſuch were *Andronicus* and *Junia*, Rom. 16. 7. who are ſaid to *be men of note among the Apoſtles* (ſome conceive they were of the ſeventy Apoſtles) then they were, for it were a ſtrange interpretation to ſay they were noted by the Apoſtles; it being to wreſt the words of *Paul* from their

native ſignification which clearly gives *Andronicus* and *Junia*, a place among the *Apoſtles*; not among the chief Apoſtles, but thoſe that were called the Meſſengers of the Churches, and the glory of Chriſt, as ſuch we read of 2 *Cor.* 8.23. And ſuch in all probability were thoſe, 3 Ep. *John*, who are ſaid *to go forth for the names ſake of Chriſt* taking *nothing of the* Gentiles, whom *Gaius* is commended for courteſly entertaining, and *Diotrephes* for rejecting. Had not theſe brethren been ſent to preach. I ſee not how *John* ſhould reprove them that received them not, or ſtir up *Gaius* to bring them on their journey WHETHERSOEVER they would go, but John's *care of them, and his helaing them in reputation*, and *defending them againſt oppoſers of their Miniſtery*, and therewithal *their forſaking all for the name of Chriſt*, and their *freely preaching to the* Gentiles *that they might be ſaved*, ſhews that they were the Meſſengers of the Lord, and of his Churches, otherwiſe if they ran before they were ſent, they could not manage the great affairs of the Goſpel among the *Gentiles*. And though it is true, *John* calls them Brethren only, yet this doth not argue that they were not in Miniſterial capacity, for we find the ſame phraſe uſed by *Paul*, concerning thoſe who were Meſſengers of the Churches, 2 Cor. 8.32.---*Or if the Brethren be enquired of, they are the Meſſengers of the Churches,*

ches, and the glory of Christ. To say that those Brethren were messengers, only as they were sent to carry the contribution from the *Gentile* Churches, to the Church at *Jerusalem* (as some would have it) is a very cold exposition; for first, it cannot be proved that they were imployed in that business; but secondly, if they were, how should they for this service only be called *the glory of Christ.* Surely this character must needs refer to their being intrusted with better treasure then Silver and Gold, sith either Brethren or Sisters of very ordinary capacity (if faithful) might have been sent with earthly treasure. Again, *Epaphroditus* is not only called the *messenger of the Church at Philippi*, but also *Paul's companion in labour, and his fellow souldier*, which shews, that though he might bring the Churches bounty to *Paul*, yet this did not confer upon him the Title of *Apostle* or *Messenger*; sith he had a greater imployment than that, namely to labour in the work of the Gospel, and to war in that holy warfare even as a *companion of* Paul *himself*, and therefore worthily might he be called a messenger of the Church of God.

Of this sort of the Ministers of the Gospel was *Barnabas*, *Luke*, *Marke*, *Silas*, *Sylvanus*, *Tychicus*, *Trophimus* and *Apollos*, as appears from their being frequently fellow Travellers and

Labourers in the Gospel with the Apostles, concerning whom I argue thus. *These persons were Ministers of the Gospel. But they were not intrusted with the care of particular Churches, therefore their Office was general, and by consequence travelling Ministers or messengers of the Gospel.* The major is true, otherwise they ran before they were sent; and then how could they preach? *Rom.* 10. or be *Paul's* fellow-souldiers and fellow Labourers? The minor is out of doubt, because of their unfixedness in respect of place, as before we have said; and beside, some of them are expresly called the Apostles of Christ, 1 *Thes.* 1. 1. where *Silvanus* is joyned with *Paul* as speaking to the *Thessalonians*, and so throughout that Epistle, and chap. 2. 6. it is thus said, *nor of men sought we glory.* We. What we? *Paul and Silvanus, when we might have been burthensome.* How might *Paul* and *Silvanus* have been burthensome? why *as the Apostles of Christ*, for such they were, otherwise they might not have been burthensome as such

Timotheus and *Titus* are evidently Ministers of the same rank, as appears partly from the Scripture even now alleadged; where, as *Paul* and *Silvanus*, so also *Timotheus*, is expresly called an *Apostle* of Christ. And partly from those *Epistles* which *Paul* wrote to them respectively, 1 Tim. 1. *As I besought thee to abide still at* Ephe-

pheſus, *when I went into* Macedoian---*that thou might warn ſome that they teach no other Doctrine, ſo do.* Had *Timothies* charge been only at *Epheſus* as Paſtour only of that Church, there had been no need to beſeech him to abide there; it being not unknown to him that it was by all means requiſite for ſuch Paſtors to reſide nea their reſpective flocks, and not to go to forrein Countreys, to mannage the Affairs of other Churches. But evident it is, that *Timothy* was not fixed in any particular Church, but was Pauls *fellow-traveller* among the Churches in divers Countreys, and frequently ſent by him to ſundry places, from the time that he was called by the Apoſtle to go forth with him, till *Paul* ſent for the Elders of the Church of *Epheſus*, which was not long before he was taken priſoner, for all which ſee. *Act.* 16 1,2,3, 4. and 17.25 & 18,5 the 19.22. the 2. 4.to 18.

And though in a certain *Poſt-ſcript* added to 2 Tim. it is ſaid, that *Timothy was ordained the firſt Biſhop of the Church at Epheſus*, yet this cannot be true, ſeeing the Church at *Epheſus* had *Biſhops*, Acts 20. 18. even whiles *Paul* and *Timothy* were companions in preaching the Goſpel in divers Countrys. Nor are the ancients poſitive in this matter, for I find *Euſebius* only ſaying that it is reported that *Timothy* was the firſt *Biſhop* of *Epheſus*, and *Titus* of *Crete*; but he

affirms nothing in this matter. But that *Timotheus* his care was for other Churches, as much as for that at *Epheſus* is evident *Philip.*2,19,20. *But I truſt in the Lord Jeſus to ſend* Timotheus *unto you---for I have no man like minded, who will naturally care for your ſtate---But ye know the proof of him that as a Son with the Father he hath ſerved with me in the Goſpel.*

Of *Titus* the ſame conſideration may be had, ſeeing he was *left in* Creet *to ſet in order the things which were wanting, and to ordain Elders in EVERY Church*, plainly ſhewing that his power in the Affairs of the Goſpel, and, his care for the Churches was the ſame *for every Church*, that it was for *any one*; which is a far different charge from that which was given to the Elders of the Church of *Epheſus*, Acts 20. for they are not bid to look to all the Churches in *Aſia*, but only to the flock (in the ſingular number) over which *the Holy Ghoſt had made them Epiſcopos, Overſeers or* Biſhops, nor was *Titus*, his care, for the Churches in *Creet* only; for *Paul* calls him his partner & fellow helper concerning the Church at Corinth, 2 *Cor.*8.23. *whether any do enquire of* Titus *he is my partner, and fellow helper concerning you.*

Of the ſame import is that place, Gal. 1. 18, 19. *I went up to* Jeruſalem *to ſee* Peter---*but other of the Apoſtles ſaw I none ſave* James *the Lords bro-*

brother: here *James* the Lords brother is called an Apoſtle, he was not one of the 12. for that *James* is called the Son of *Alpheus*, Math. 10. 3. of this mind is *Euſebius*.

But *Jerom* would ſometimes make theſe two one ſelf-ſame man, and yet otherwhiles doth call him *Decimum tertium Apoſtolum*, that is, the thirteenth Apoſtle, but that *James* the Lords brother was not one of the 12. is evident 1 *Cor.* 15. 5. to 8. where it is ſaid that *our Lord apppeared firſt to* Cephas, *then to the* 12. *after that he was ſeen of* James *then of* ALL *the Apoſtles*. Two things are hence to be noted. 1. That *James* is diſtinguiſhed from the 12. and ſo are thoſe perſons ſignified by ALL the Apoſtles; for it cannot be that by all the Apoſtles ſhould be meant the chief Apoſtles, for they were mentioned before, and *Paul* himſelf who was an Apoſtle of the ſame dignity, is mentioned afterwards, but by ALL the Apoſtles, is moſt like to be meant the 70. Diſciples whom our Lord ſent out as meſſengers to preach the Goſpel in every City whither himſelf would go, and who no doubt became famous Miniſters of the Goſpel after the Aſcention of our Lord, and with this *Euſebius* doth ſeem to agree; we ſee then, partly from evident Texts of Scripture, and partly from rational probabilities, that the Primitive Chur-

Churches were endewed with a Miniſtry of many meſſengers or Apoſtles beſide thoſe who were the Foundation layers and Maſter-builders in the Church of Chriſt; And hence we infer that God hath ordained ſuch a miniſtery to continue in his Church till the body of our Lord be perfected.

4. *From the practice of thoſe brethren who moſt queſtion the being of meſſengers, as a miniſtery in the Church at this day. It will appear that ſuch an Office doth remain.*

For, do they not freqnently ſend out men to act Authoritatively both in preaching the Goſpel to them that are without? in ſetting things in order in remote Congregations? to exerciſe Diſcipline by Excomunnication of offenders? and remitting the penitent? by ordaining them Elders, and diſpencing to them the holy Ordinances? &c. As theſe things cannot be denied, ſo we may juſtly enquire how it comes to paſs that they do thus? if indeed the Church hath none to act in the capacity of Apoſtles, or meſſengers of the Goſpel, at leaſt as we have defined them, ſeeing it cannot be proved, (neither I think do our Brethren affirm) that Elders of the Churches have equal power in other Congregations, as in that which they are choſen to ſerve, neither is it in the power of any Congregation to take the

Paſtour

Paſtour of any Church from them; neither may any Church impoſe their Paſtour upon another Church, wherefore unleſs there be a miniſtery remaining in the Church which is related to all Congregations indifferently, we may perceive what confuſion is like to enſue. Moreover if thoſe who go to preach to the World cannot juſtifie their calling, how ſhall they comfort themſelves in their undertaking, or anſwer oppoſers when queſtioned concerning their Commiſſion? eſpecially in ſuch places where the Scriptures are received ſith all that have read them may eaſily perceive, that as the Goſpel is to be preached, ſo thoſe which go forth as Miniſters thereof, muſt be ſent either by immediate miſſion from Heaven (which our brethren pretend not to) or ſome mediate miſſion from the Church of God, which none can pretend to, that deny the Office of meſſengers ſith other Officers are not by vertue of their Office to go out into the World to teach the Nations, or to preach the Goſpel to every creature. If to that which we have ſaid it ſhould be replyed, *That Churches which are diſtant one from another may by conſent let the Elders of one Church act as Elders in another*, &c. this is ſooner ſaid than proved, for ſeeing *Officers have their Commiſſion at what time they are ordained*, it cannot be that they ſhould have

have their power (*de jure*) made either leſs or greater by the conſent or non-conſent of any perſon or perſons whatſoever.

Again, It would be underſtood *how long the power our brethren gives to men to act as Elders in thoſe Congregations doth remain?* Whether they thenceforth ſtand equally engaged to Overſee thoſe Churches, as the Church that firſt called them to ſerve as Paſtors? And alſo *how many ſeveral Congregations they may act in as Paſtours by conſent?* Whether two only, or ten only, or an hundred, and ſo *ad infinitum.* Surely if once they give particular Paſtours, power to act as Elders in more Congregations then they were at the time of their Ordination, appointed to Overſee; they can never bound their power; and then what *meſſenger* of the Church did ever exceed them in that reſpect. And further, if our brethren can give their particular Paſtours power to act as Paſtours in many Churches *for a month* or *half a year*, then why not *a year* 2. or 3. and ſo for the term of life, the occaſions ſtill being the ſame? And how much comes this ſhort of the power committed to any meſſenger in the World at this day? Wherefore ſeeing that our brethren do exerciſe as great Authority in ſending men to preach to the World, and to ſettle their Churches as we do, it is ſtrange they ſhould diſlike

our

our calling those Offices by such names as the Scripture gives them, rather then by such names as are exclusive of that Authority, which is exercised either by those who go out to preach the Gospel to every creature, or those that take the care of all the Churches. True it is, that *Peter* calls himself an *Elder*, and that he was *Elder* in one Church as well as in another, but this was becaus he had an Office which was comprehensive of all Offices in the Church, and hence it is that we find the Apostles sometimes performing the Office of *Deacons*, when it might be done without lett to the preaching of the Word, but though it be true that the greater contains the less, yet the less doth not contain the greater; for it cannot be denied, that the Office of a *particular Elder of a Congregation* only, and a charge to *Teach all Nations*, are things inconsistant to one and the same person.

Acts 6. 2. Gal. 2. 9, 10.

What may or ought to be done in preaching the Gospel by persons gifted in the Church, as a *general priviledge or duty*, it is not my business here to discourse, but only to shew what it is *which necessarily is to be done by vertue of those Offices which God hath ordained in his Church*, otherwise it were easie to shew that God hath not only provided *a Liberty* in his Church for the

the *modeſt exerciſe of the gifts of his Spirit*, in the way of *Propheſie, Exhortation, &c.* That the body may be edified. But alſo when by his providence any of the *members* of the body are expoſed *to remote places*, or otherwiſe *called to teſtifie their Faith*, they may lawfully *Evangelize* or preach the Goſpel, as is evident both from the holy Scriptures, *Act.* 8.4, 5. And other very ancient Authors. See *Socrates Scholaſticus*, l. 1. the 15. 16. Chapters.

5. The neceſſity of meſſengers or Apoſtles (in the ſenſe we have defined) is yet more evident *from the ſtate of the world, in reſpect of their continual need to be taught the Goſpel in the ancient purity thereof; and the rather becauſe of that great danger they lie under, by reaſon of the many deceivers or falſe Apoſtles, which are gone out into the world, who corrupt the word by mingling therewith their own Traditions.*

The world is the Lords Harveſt, into which he is pleaſed to ſend his Labourers, and the Church is commanded to pray that the Lord of the Harveſt would ſend forth painful Labourers into his Harveſt, *Luke.* 10. 1, 2. It will not be denied that theſe labourers are (at leaſt chiefly) ſome that are in a miniſterial capacity to preach the Goſpel. And they cannot ſo well be underſtood of any particular function in the miniſtery, as that of meſſengers, partly for that the

the other Officers in the miniſtry are bound to particular congregations as we have ſhewed before, and partly for that our Saviour gives this direction to the Church, upon the occaſion of his ſending forth meſſengers to preach the Goſpel. If then it be the duty of the Church at this day, to pray to the Lord that he would ſend forth painful Labourers to preach to the world, (as ſure none can deny that) there is not any room left to doubt of the continuance of ſuch an Office, as that of meſſengers of the Goſpel, for that very clauſe touching their being ſent forth, and that as Lambs in the midſt of Wolves, doth ſufficiently inſtruct us what Labourers theſe are. A neceſſity therefore lieeth upon the Church of God to diſpoſe of her Members to that needful work, as the Lord vouchſafes to fit them for; leaſt otherwiſe ſhe be like thoſe who make many prayers for that which they never intend to do.

It is certain the Church hath no power to cauſe the world to come to her Aſſemblies, nor is it like that the world will ſend to the Church of God for inſtruction. It remaineth therefore, ſeeing the Goſpel is for the illumination of all, that as God hath wont to ſend forth his Ambaſſadours to beſeech the world in Chriſts ſtead to be reconciled to God even ſo, one fruit of the Aſcenſion of our Lord (at this day) is a

gift

gift even for the Rebellious, that the Lord God might dwel among them, *Pſal.* 68 18. which being compared with *Epheſ.* 4. may very well be interpreted of a gifted miniſtery to turn Rebellious ſinners from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. To which agrees that place, *John* 16.8. where our Lord doth aſſure his Diſciples, that when he ſhould ſend the Holy Ghoſt, he ſhould convince the world of ſin, of Righteouſneſs and judgment, and this (no doubt) as he ſhould operate or work upon men by the miniſtery of the word, which promiſe either ended with that age (which is abſurd to think) or elſe if it remain to theſe days, then it ſuppoſes a miniſtery to hold forth to the world the everlaſting Goſpel for the obedience of faith, I mean ſuch a miniſtry as are bound even by virtue of their calling, as debtors to the wiſe and unwiſe, to preach the Goſpel to thoſe that are without.

There is no doubt but *Satan* hath his *Apoſtles*, Miniſters or *meſſengers* in the world, as well as in times paſt 2 *Cor.* 11.13,22. It were ſtrange now if our *Lord Chriſt* ſhould have none to withſtand theſe, if need be with an *are they Apoſtles? ſo am I*, as well as with an *are they Miniſters of Chriſt? ſo am I.* Nor doth the Apoſtle hear *diſſallow the Appellation of Apoſtles or Mini-*

Miniſters of Chriſt to others beſide himſelf and the reſt of the chief Apoſtles : But that which he doth diſallow, is, that men ſhould be called either the one or the other, when their works declared that they were *falſe Apoſtles*, and ſuch as only *transformed* themſelves as the Miniſters of Righteouſneſs. But had it been unlawful for any to be called *Apoſtles* beſide the Foundation-layers, *Paul* had a very eaſie way to confute theſe deceivers even by telling them that their profeſſing themſelves *Apoſtles* was proof ſufficient that they were deceivers; yet he never makes that an Argument at all, but goes about to vindicate his *Apoſtleſhip* as being nothing inferiour to thoſe *Transformed-Apoſtles*, ſith he was not a whit behind the very *chiefeſt Apoſtles*. The ſame conſideration may be had of that place, Rev. 2.2. *Thou haſt tryed them which ſay they are Apoſtles and are not, and haſt found them Lyars* : For had there been no more Apoſtles but the chief Apoſtles, there had been no need to try whether theſe were *Apoſtles* of Chriſt or not, for ſtill their very ſaying they were ſuch, had, without more ado proved them Lyars, and like as if any ſhould ariſe and ſay *I am Chriſt the Saviour of the World*, his very ſaying ſo were the greateſt evidence that the ſame is a deceiver. But why

ſo? verily becauſe there is only *one Lord Jeſus* our Saviour, *whom the Heavens muſt retain till the times of the reſtitution of all things*; even ſo, if there were not a ſucceſſion of *Apoſtles*, it were one of the eaſieſt things in the World to diſcover a falſe *Apoſtle*.

Finally, The Goſpel muſt be preached in all the World for a witneſs to all people, and then ſhall the end come, *Math.* 24.14. which ſuppoſes the being of a miniſtery, whoſe work it is to preach *To all Nations*, even to the end of the world, *Rev.*14 6. *The Angel* [*a definite for an indefinite number*] *meſſenger* or *Meſſengers* muſt preach the *everlaſting Goſpel* immediately before great *Babylon* fall. It followeth then, that though darkneſs hath much prevailed ſince the firſt publication of the Goſpel, yet a miniſtery ſhall go forth, even the meſſengers of the Goſpel by whom *the earth ſhall be enlightned*.

And here let it be noted that the preacher (or preachers) of the everlaſting Goſpel, hath not a Goſpel to confirm with Signs and Wonders, but a Goſpel to preach to every Nation, Kindred, Tongue, and People, even the ſame *that was preached by our Lord, and confirmed to us by them that heard him.*

The ſum of that which we have ſaid is this; That as God hath given to his Church a fixed Mini-

Miniſtery of *Biſhops*, *Elders*, *Paſtors*, &c. to take the care of particular Congregations ſo he hath given her a travelling miniſtery, or unfixed, in reſpect of particular Societies or Congregations, to whom it appertains by virtue of their Office to take all occaſions *to cauſe the Light of the glorious Goſpel to ſhine unto ſuch as ſit in darkneſs* to plant Churches, to confirm and ſettle them in the Faith and Order of the Goſpel. To viſit and comfort thoſe which have believed through grace.

Go ye, preach the Goſpel to every creature. Jeſus Chriſt ---who was preached among you by US, even by me, and Silvanus, *and* Timotheus. *Thanks be to God which maketh manifeſt the ſavour of his knowledge by US in every place.* Mark 16. 16. 2 Cor. 1. 19. 2 Cor. 2. 14.

And when they had preached the Goſpel to that City, and taught many, they returned again to Liſtra, *and to* Iconium, *and* Antioch *confirming the ſouls of the Diſciples: For this cauſe have I ſent unto you* Timotheus, *who is my beloved Son and faithful in the Lord, who ſhall bring you in remembrance* Acts 14. 21, 22. 1 Cor. 4. 17.

of my wayes which be in
Act. 14.36. *Christ, as I teach every where in every Church, let us go again and visit our brethren in every City where we have preached the Word, and see how they do.*

And Lo I am with you
Math. 28.20. alwayes, even to the End of the World.

When we say the messengers of the Gospel are *unfixed ministers.* Our meaning is not thereby to deny, but that for the more convenient mannagement of the great Affairs of the Gospel, they may divide themselves into divers parts, and so may be called the *messengers of such Countreys, as with whom they most frequently converse of the Gospel of Christ*, Gal. 2. 9. *when* James, Cephas, *and* John *perceived the grace which was given to me and* Barnabas, *they gave unto me and* Barnabas *the right hand of fellowship that we should go to the Heathen, and they to the Circumcision.* In *Asia* we read of *seven* * *messengers*, and these related to *seven Churches* in *seven principal Cities* in that Country. yet it may not be doubted but there were many Congregations and scattered Disciples in Country Villages, and so, many *Elders* also: yea, and that in those very

* See the Old Transl.

ry *Churches* which are particularly nam'd, for in the Church of *Epheſus* (which is *the firſt* of the ſeven) we find divers *Biſhops* or *Elders* before *John* wrote from *Patmos*, Acts 20. 17, 28.

It is true, the *Ancients* call theſe ſeven Angels or meſſengers, *Biſhops* or *chief Miniſters*. But then we know by *Biſhops* they commonly mean ſuch as had the charge of many particular Congregations. Thus they make *Timothy* a Biſhop, yet confeſs him to be a preacher of the Goſpel from *Epheſus* unto *Illiricum*, and throughout *Hellas* in *Achaia*. *Titus* they make Biſhop of *Creet*, yet ſuch an one as preached the Goſpel in all that Country. They alſo make *Silvanus* Biſhop of *Theſſalonica*, but the Scripture as we have ſeen calls him an *Apoſtle*, as well as the reſt. Now whether it be more ſafe to call thoſe travelling Miniſters of Chriſt *Biſhops*, after the manner of men; or *Apoſtles*, after the manner of the *Scripture*, is the buſineſs for the ſober and unprejudiced Reader to conſider.

FINIS.